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110



- > Saigyō and his poems in ukiyo-e
- > The legacy of Henry Cole
- > Scenic views of Nikkō
- > Tokugawa rule in Meiji prints





Tosa Mitsusada  
Pair of tea caddies  
(see p. 88)

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### 浮世絵芸術

2020 No.180



国際浮世絵学会





## Matsumura Keibun (1779-1843)

**Keibun** was an academic painter who was famous for his masterful Shijō-style brushwork.

Keibun was the son of a senior official of the Kyoto gold mint. His father died when he was two years old. His 27 years older brother Matsumura Go Shun (1752-1811) raised him and took care for his education. He was the founder of what became known as the Maruyama-Shijō style. After the death of his brother in 1811 Keibun inherited the studio on Shijō street. Together with Toyohiko (1773-1845) they were left to carry on the Shijō school, Keibun specializing in *kachōga*, birds and flowers, and Toyohiko in landscape painting. Keibun was one of Kyoto's leading artists and teachers.

◀ *Iryo* - Loquat (Japanese medlar)  
Signed: Keibun  
Seal: Keibun  
Sumi and orange on paper, 119.5 x 35.4  
Pale brown brocade and pink silk mounting, 202 x 49

▼ *Jōmotsuba*, an abundance of pine needles:  
*Hibachi*/Akodonobiki, a brazier in the shape of a helmet  
(winter pumpkin) for drying seaweed, tea leaf, etc.  
Signed with Kōd (Kōkichi)  
Grey crackled gohonde Awatayaki, with a dark brown tenobe  
underglaze painting of pinecones and needles, 12.8 x 19



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# andon



110

Shedding light on Japanese art

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*Breaking Out of Tradition: Japanese Lacquer, 1890–1950* by Jan Dees

*Julia Hutt*

*Andon* 110 offers a special focus on Japanese woodblock-print culture.

Capucine Korenberg delves into the complex subject of the original versus the reproduction in a discussion of undoubtedly the most iconic of all woodblock prints, Katsushika Hokusai's 1831 *The Great Wave*. Moving from the celebrated and the well-known, this issue also explores lesser-known genres of Japanese woodblock prints. Oikawa Shigeru introduces us to the type of prints known as *shikake-e* ('trick pictures') to reveal how the publishing industry adapted to the vicissitudes of the changing world of kabuki performance and accommodated the portrayal of scenes with multiple actors. Tony Cole, Robert Tauxe and Ann Herring present a brief overview of the woodblock-printed toy print – the constructed diorama – in the cities of Tokyo and Osaka and how regional differences defined their production.

The Kamigata (Osaka/Kyoto area) provides the backdrop for two further articles. The first by Ellis Tinios gives an eloquent account of Japanese society through the eyes of the Kyoto artist Yamaguchi Soken. In the second, John Fiorillo shares his discovery of a print by the Osaka print designer Hasegawa Munehiro that illustrates the obscure Osaka performer Ichikawa Gyokuen.

Beatrice B. Shoemaker takes us outside this popular realm of woodblock prints and books to the rarefied culture of tea in her investigation of the Kyoto tea master Hayami Sōtatsu and the Hayami school of tea. Julia Hutt's expert review of a publication on Japanese lacquer from 1890 to 1950 rounds off *Andon* 110.

*Andon* Editorial Board

On the cover:  
Hasegawa Munehiro  
Ichikawa Gyokuen as *Watōnai*  
(see p. 65)







#### Andon, Shedding Light on Japanese Art

Andon, the journal of the Society for Japanese Art (SJA), provides a forum for the exchange of ideas and information relating to Japanese art. Andon is published twice a year.

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**John FIORILLO** is an independent researcher and writer on traditional and modern Japanese prints, with a special interest in Kamigata-e and sôsaku kongo (Creative Prints). He has published articles in Andon, contributed to the *Hotel Encyclopedia of Japanese Woodblock Prints* (2005), and designed and written the websites *ViewingJapanesePrints.net* and *OsakaPrints.com*. He also serves as a member of the Andon editorial board.

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**Capucine KORENBERG** has worked as a scientist at the British Museum since 2003. Her research centres on assessing the suitability of conservation treatments for artworks and antiquities as well as acquiring an understanding of the deterioration processes in these objects in order to better preserve them. Following a major exhibition on the ukiyo-e artist Katsushika Hokusai at the British Museum in 2017, she has developed a strong interest in the study of Japanese woodblock prints, with a special focus on woodblock wear and colourants.

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**Robert TAUXE** is a public-health epidemiologist in Atlanta, Georgia, who trained in internal medicine and public health. A long-time assembler and collector of paper models and dioramas, he has had a deep interest in Japanese art and culture ever since visiting Japan at age twelve, when he first saw performances of kabuki and noh theatre. Those avocations merged in 2006 when he found a ukiyo-e print that was clearly part of a paper model and subsequently learned of kumigata-tôrô.

**ERIK TINIOS**, visiting researcher at the Art Research Center (ARC), Ritsumeikan University, Kyoto, works on the art of the book and publishing in early modern Japan. His recent publications include *Japanese Prints: Ukiyo-e in Edo, 1700-1900* (2010), *Understanding Japanese Illustrated Books: A Short Introduction to Their History, Bibliography and Format* (with Suzuki Jun, 2013), 'Hokusai and His Block-cutters' (*Print Quarterly*, vol. XXXII, no. 2, June 2015), 'A Neglected Book by Hokusai: Ehon Tôshien gogen zekku of i880' (*Print Quarterly*, vol. XXXVII, no. 1, March 2020) and 'The Splendors of shunpon: Form, Design, and Color in Edo-period Erotic Books', in *The Kimono in Print: 300 Years of Japanese Design* (2020).

#### Guidelines for Submission to Andon

Submissions to Andon are accepted year round with articles submitted from 1 February to 1 July considered for the Winter issue and from 1 August to 1 January for the Spring issue. Articles should be no more than 5,000 words, with 10-15 illustrations. Reviews of books, catalogues or exhibitions should be no more than 700 words, with 3 illustrations, including a cover image. All submissions should be delivered in a digital format in accordance with Andon's house style (a style-sheet is available upon request). Submitted articles are subject to review before final acceptance; authors will receive three complimentary copies upon publication. Any enquiries regarding the submission of articles should be addressed to the SJA.

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Society  
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Art





# The Great Wave: How to Identify Reproductions

Capucine Korenberg

Katsushika Hokusai's *Under the Wave off Kanagawa* (*Kanagawa oki nami ura*), more popularly known as *The Great Wave*, is undoubtedly the most iconic of all Japanese woodblock prints (fig. 1). First published in 1831, it has since inspired generations of Japanese and non-Japanese artists, permeating popular culture worldwide from the nineteenth century to the present day (figs. 2 & 3). The design of *The Great Wave* has also been used in advertising campaigns for many brands, including Panasonic, Kikkoman and Perrier. Most recently, the Japanese manga artist Araki Hirohiko (b. 1960) designed *The Sky above the Great Wave off the Coast of Kanagawa*, one of the official posters of the now postponed 2020 Tokyo Paralympics.<sup>1</sup>



1. (previous page)

Early original impression  
of *The Great Wave*, c. 1830–  
1832, colour woodblock  
print, 25.4 × 38.1 cm,  
published by Nishimura  
Yohachi

The Metropolitan Museum,  
The Howard Mansfield Collection,  
Purchase, Rogers Fund, accession  
no. JP2569, CCo 1.0 Universal

2.

Henri Gustave Jossot  
(1866–1951)

*The Wave (La vague)*, 1894,  
lithograph in green on  
cream laid paper, 61 × 43 cm

Art Institute of Chicago, Joseph  
Brooks Fair and Frank B. Hubachek  
funds, Prints and Drawing  
Endowment Fund, accession  
no. 2019.140, CCo 1.0 Universal



During the Edo period (1603–1868), many woodblock prints were mass-produced, inexpensive items. In the 1830s, for instance, it was recorded that a woodblock print cost the same as about two bowls of noodles. The production of woodblock prints was a commercial business and designs were printed as long as there were customers willing to buy them. Experts estimate that Hokusai's best-selling *The Great Wave* could have been printed up to 8,000 times using the original woodblocks.<sup>2</sup> There are often variations in the colour palette and printing effects between different printings of the same design. In my role as a museum scientist, I undertook a study over several months of the variations of

*The Great Wave* from its first to last surviving printings.<sup>3</sup> This involved locating as many surviving impressions as possible in the collections of museums, galleries and libraries around the world. It should be noted that of the thousands of impressions of *The Great Wave* originally made only a fraction has survived to the present day. This is because commercial prints were considered ephemera, not objects of value, during the Edo period. Earthquakes and fires, a frequent occurrence in Japan, also contributed to the loss of countless prints.





3.

Pejac

*Everyone is an Artist (Tribute to Katsushika Hokusai)*, 2015, street mural in Kawasaki, Japan

© 2015 Pejac, Courtesy of the artist

Not surprisingly, many reproductions of this celebrated print exist. It was unexpected, however, to encounter several reproductions catalogued as originals in the collections of national and smaller or regional institutions. I also observed that reproductions of *The Great Wave* have been represented as originals in exhibitions and publications.<sup>4</sup>

Reproductions have never been systematically distinguished from the original impressions of *The Great Wave* and the question of whether an impression is original is of great interest to museum curators and enthusiasts of Japanese prints. As I came across more reproductions of *The Great Wave* and discussed my observations

with colleagues and collectors of Japanese prints, I realised that the identification of reproductions was not always straightforward. I pondered how useful it would be to find ways to differentiate them from originals. After having examined more than one hundred original impressions of *The Great Wave*, I felt ready to meet this challenge.



## The Making of Woodblock Prints

To better understand how to identify a reproduction, it might be instructive to describe briefly how Japanese woodblock prints are produced. Using a set of carved woodblocks, the main outlines were printed using the 'key block', which is block-cut with very fine ridges, while the coloured areas were produced with separate colour woodblocks. Typically, the outlines were printed first, then the printer employed the first colour woodblock, the second colour woodblock and so on.<sup>3</sup> Up to eight woodblocks may have been used for *The Great Wave*. These are long lost but the key block of a modern reproduction is shown in figure 4.

Reproductions were made from completely different woodblocks than those employed for the original print. Woodblocks were block-cut manually and there were always variations between two woodblocks of the same design. Therefore, it should be possible to distinguish a reproduction by comparing the lines and the shapes of the solid areas with those in an original impression. Even if a woodblock was very accurately copied, variations should still be discernible in the intricately block-cut features, such as the outlines, the title or the signature, which were more challenging to cut.

### A Closer Look at *The Great Wave*

Hokusai's iconic work was printed with a limited colour palette. Although different printings vary, the composition typically employs dark blue, medium blue and light blue for the sea; dark grey, light grey and yellow for the boats, Mount Fuji and the sky; and light brown for the clouds. Some of the pigments are light sensitive; the yellow and light-brown pigments have often faded. Infrequently, when an original print had very



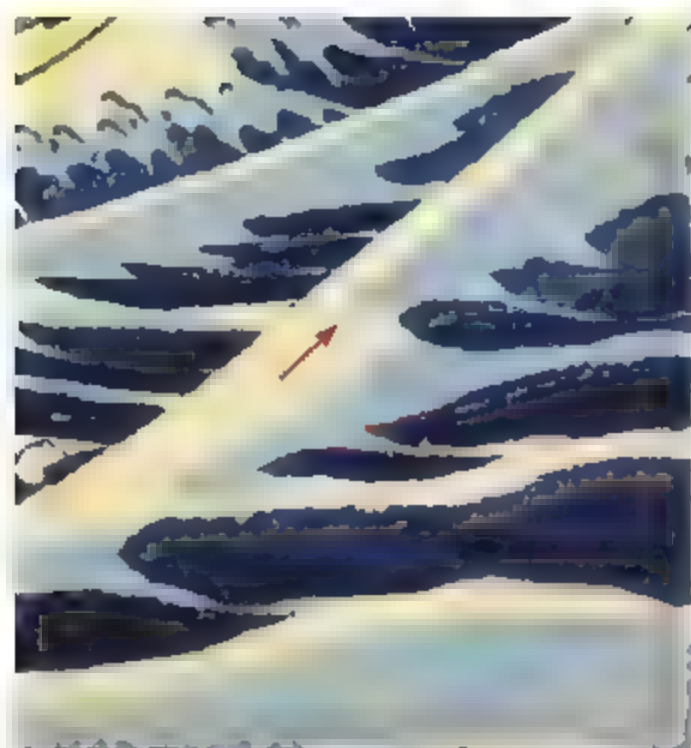
4-  
Key block of a modern reproduction of *The Great Wave*, 2017, block-cut by Suga Kayoko, Tokyo

The British Museum, accession no. 2017.3069.1  
©The Trustees of the British Museum

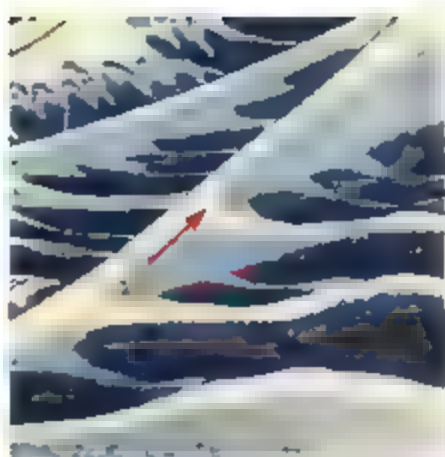
faded colours, replacement colours mimicking the originals were applied, but not always faithfully. Takamizawa Enji (1870–1927), who specialised in reproductions, was notorious for engaging highly skilled artisans to 'revamp' damaged ukiyo-e prints, sometimes washing out the old ink and carving new woodblocks to reprint areas with new ink. He then passed off the revamped prints as pristine original prints that fooled both print experts and collectors, including the American architect Frank Lloyd Wright (1867–1959).<sup>6</sup> An example of a revamped impression of *The Great Wave* is housed in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum in New York.<sup>7</sup> The outlines in that work match those of other originals but the forms of the clouds diverge. It is important to be aware of this practice in order to avoid the misidentification of a revamped original impression as a reproduction.



5a.



5b.



5a-b.

The light-blue areas in late original impressions were not printed with the same woodblock as were early original impressions.

(a) A late original impression

Art Institute of Chicago  
accession no. 1952.343. CC0 1.0  
universa

(b) An early original impression

Art Institute of Chicago  
accession no. 1952.343. CC0 1.0  
universa

The colour woodblocks for a design were sometimes replaced, most likely because they were damaged beyond use. *The Great Wave* is no exception. At some point, the woodblock for the light-blue shapes in the sea, as well as the woodblocks for the yellow and grey areas in the boats, were recut without changes in the blocks for the medium blue/dark blue/light brown or the key block.<sup>8</sup> This is seen in the light-blue forms in the sea (fig. 5a-b). Again, one should be aware of the existence of these new colour woodblocks for *The Great Wave* so as not to read an original impression as a reproduction.

## Identifying Reproductions

In my study, I determined reproductions through a close examination of the details printed from the key block, including the straw mats in the boats or the 'claws' of the waves. This was a lengthy process. Once I had ascertained which works were reproductions, I sought a more expedite method to differentiate them from originals.

In all of the original impressions of *The Great Wave* analysed, I noticed a small dark-blue shape in a spot of sea foam (fig. 6a-b). According to David Bull, an experienced ukiyo-e style block-cutter and printer based in Tokyo, this most likely corresponds to a sliver of wood that the block-cutter did not remove during the block-cutting of the original woodblock.<sup>9</sup> I observed that this small imperfection was absent in each of the reproductions under examination. A high-resolution photograph would have been required, however, to detect this small imperfection. I then discovered another way to identify nearly all reproductions without a high-resolution photograph. When I studied how *The Great Wave* was made, I noticed that the darkest shapes in the sea had been printed in two steps: they were first printed with the same ink used for the outlines, the cartouche and the signature (typically dark grey-blue) and next with medium-blue ink, or the other way round as it is difficult to verify which ink was applied first. These two successive printings were done with separate



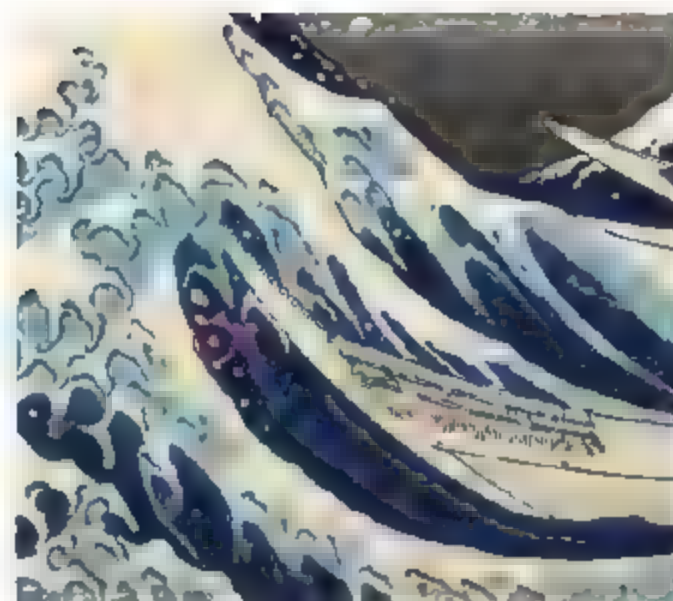
6a-b.

(a) A small imperfection is visible on all high-resolution images of original impressions of *The Great Wave*; (b) location of this small imperfection

Figure 6a-b. Original impressions of *The Great Wave*. (a) A small imperfection is visible on all high-resolution images of original impressions of *The Great Wave*; (b) location of this small imperfection



6a.

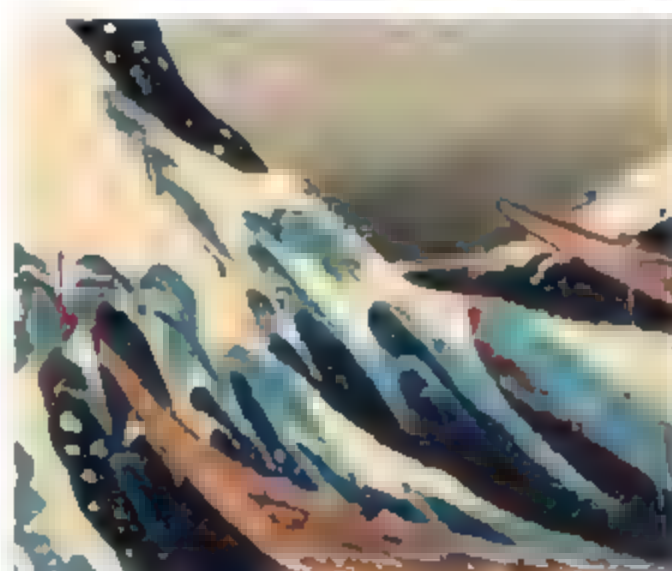


6b.

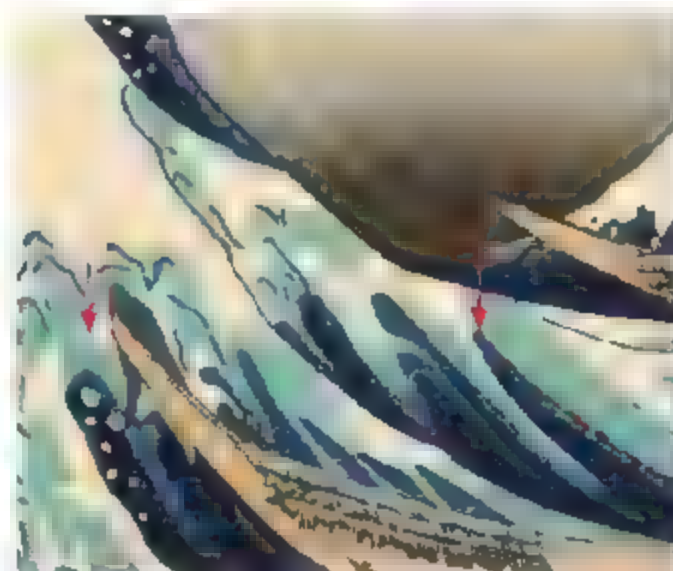
7a-b

(a) In the original impressions, small shapes in the sea are printed in the same colour as the outlines, here black, with no overprinting of medium blue

Figure 7a-b. Original impressions of *The Great Wave*. (a) In the original impressions, small shapes in the sea are printed in the same colour as the outlines, here black, with no overprinting of medium blue



7a.



7b.

(b) These shapes are printed in a lighter blue in reproductions

Library of Congress, [www.loc.gov](http://www.loc.gov)  
and Universal

woodblocks – the key block and the medium-blue woodblock. Interestingly, there are four dark shapes in the sea in the centre of the design that were printed with only the key block, with no overprinting of medium blue. This indicates that these four shapes were not block-cut in the medium-blue woodblock, unlike all the other dark shapes of the sea. The absence of medium-blue overprinting in these areas is particularly striking in late impressions of the originals, in which black instead of dark blue ink was utilised for the outlines (fig. 7a–b). It is not clear whether the absence of these shapes in the medium-blue woodblock was intentional or was a mistake made by the block-cutter. Nevertheless, I noticed that in all the reproductions these specific areas were not printed in the same colour as the outlines, except in one type of reproduction. This showed that, unlike the

original impressions, these areas were printed with another woodblock – either medium or light blue (see fig. 7b).

It also came to my attention that some of the early reproductions (late nineteenth to mid-twentieth century) using the same set of reproduction woodblocks have survived in more than one impression. (This study excludes modern reproductions that exist in very large numbers of impressions. Printings from some of these contemporary block sets continue today.) I have identified eight types in total, all dating to before 1950.<sup>14</sup> Compare this with Hokusai's series *A Tour of Waterfalls in Various Provinces* (1836), released after *The Great Wave*, for which only two types of reproductions are known.<sup>15</sup> In an effort to distinguish reproductions from the original version of *The Great Wave*, I looked for the most salient differences, consulted



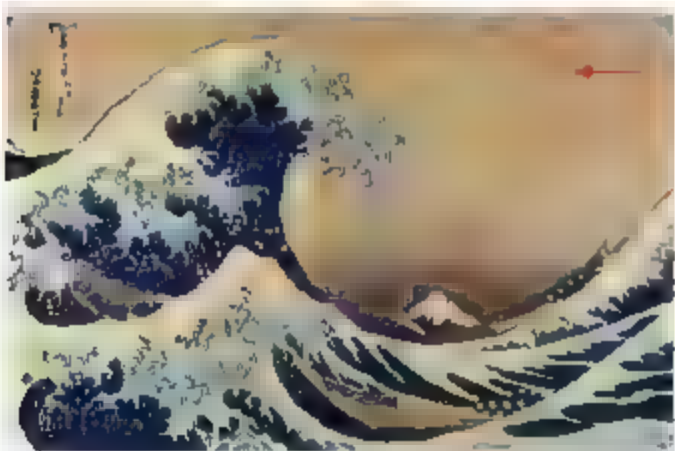
and compared the records of the institutions holding reproductions and, where possible, sought out the name of the publisher and the earliest known date of production for each type. These points are outlined in the following tables.

**Type 1** (figs. 8a–d)

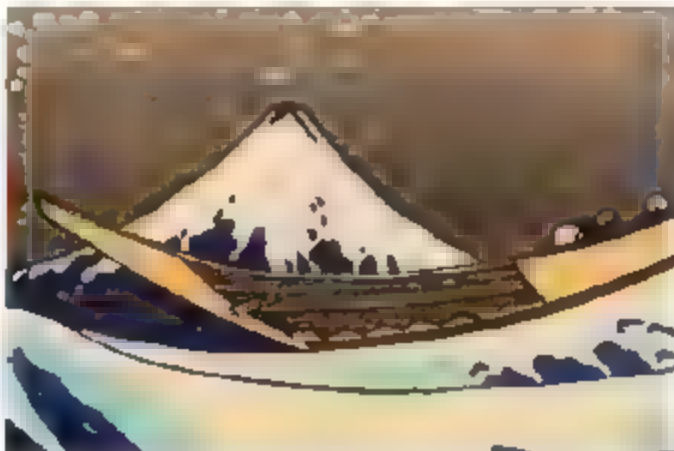
Characteristics	Earliest Acquisition**	Collections
(1) Different cloud shape* (2) Short strokes for the straw in the grey mats in the distant boat omitted	Victoria and Albert Museum, 1922 (bequest of Thomas H. Lee)	Victoria and Albert Museum (London); Georgia Museum of Art (Athens, US); National Museum Krakow; Dunedin Public Art Gallery (New Zealand)

\* The clouds are not visible in several reproductions because the colour of the sky has faded

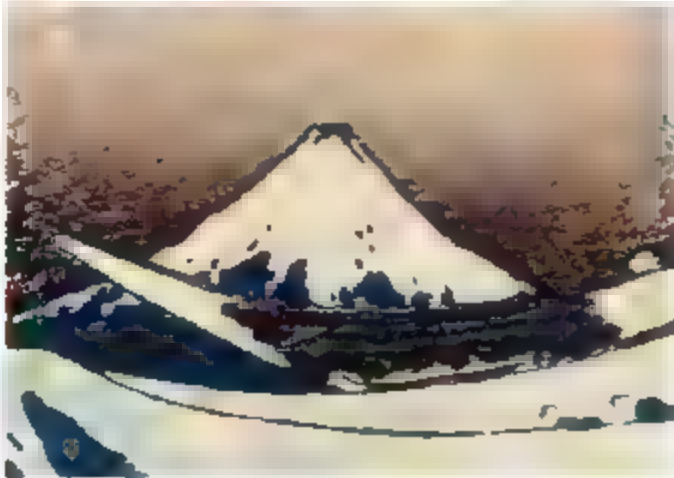
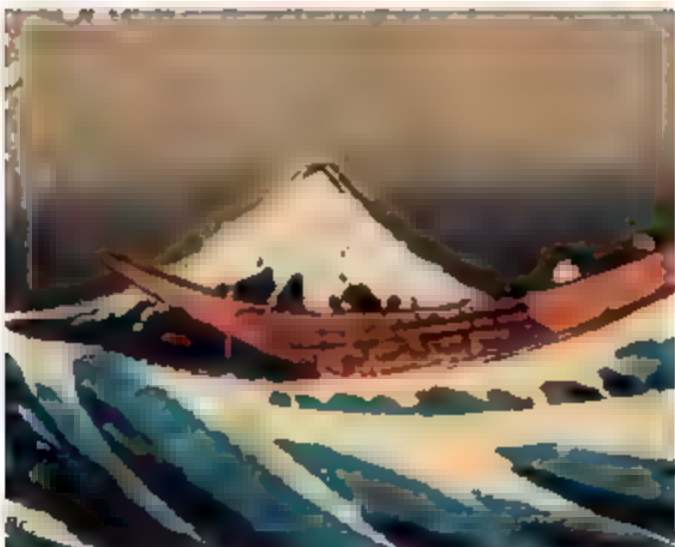
\*\*The dates in this category are based on the forty-eight reproduction impressions examined for this study. It is possible that an impression entered the collection of another institution earlier. I surveyed the collection databases of approximately 120 institutions to discover whether they house reproductions of *The Great Wave*.



8a.



8b.



8d.

8a–d  
Type 1 Reproductions

(a) Full view, (b) straw mat on the boat

(c) Short strokes show the texture of the straw mat in an original impression

(d) They are obscured by the dark grey colour used to print the mat in some late original impressions

It is likely that the Type 1 Reproductions were copied from such impressions



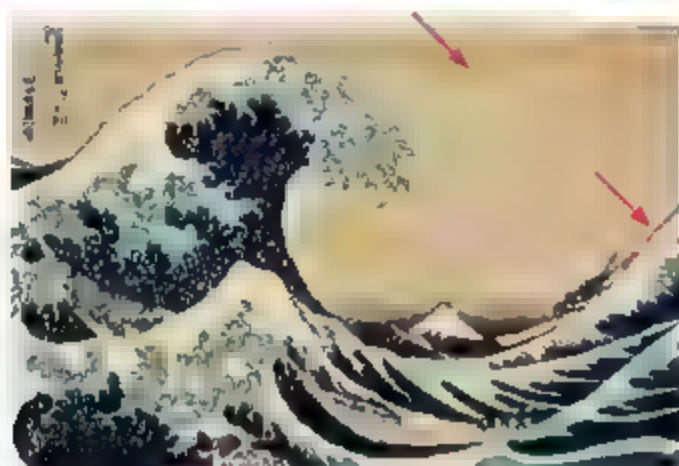
## Type 2 (figs 9a–c)

Characteristics	Earliest Acquisition	Collections
(1) Different cloud shape*	(1) Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, 1898	Victoria and Albert Museum (London); Chazen Museum of Art (Madison, Wisconsin); Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, John J. Burns Library Boston College; National Gallery Prague
(2) Different toothed ends of the dark-blue wave recesses in the bottom left-hand side corner	(2) Victoria and Albert Museum, 1915 (among tools and materials demonstrating Japanese printing acquired from Miyata Rokuzaemon)**	
(3) Unevenness in the line of the wave on the right-hand side		

\* The cloud is not visible in several reproductions because the colour of the sky has faded

\*\* Donated by Miyata Rokuzaemon on behalf of Yamawaki (H.), the Commissioner

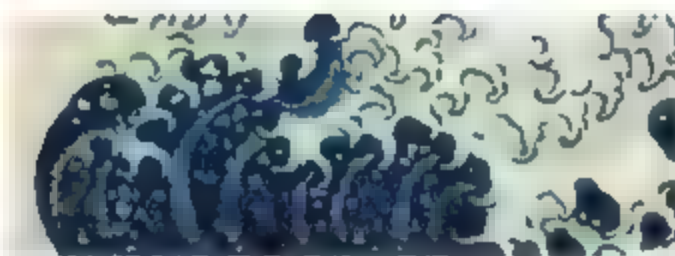
General of His Imperial Majesty's Commission to the Panama International Exposition.<sup>9</sup>



9a.



9b.

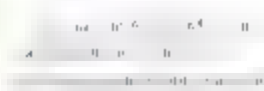


9c.

9a–c.

Type 2 Reproductions

(a) Full view, (b) dark-blue wave recesses in the reproduction with enhanced contrast to better show their toothed ends



(c) Dark-blue wave recesses in an original impression



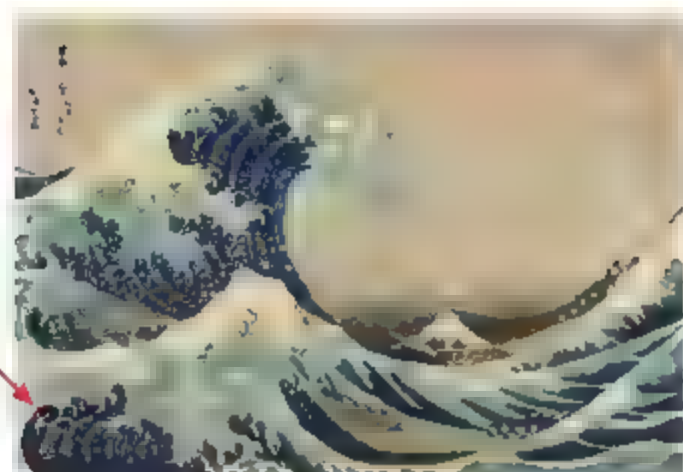
## Type 3 (figs. 10a–c, 11a–c)

Characteristics	Publication date	Collections
(1) Different light-blue shape in the bottom left-hand corner	According to the database of the Library of Congress, these prints were produced by Adachi before 1940; the Adachi publishing firm was established in 1926,* suggesting that these prints were probably published between 1926 and 1940	Library of Congress (Washington, DC); Museum Rietberg Zurich
(2) Rather faithful reproductions; even the breaks in the lines caused by woodblock wear have been reproduced		
(3) Copied from late impressions printed using a replacement woodblock for light-blue areas		

\* The Adachi publishing firm, founded by Adachi Toyohisa (1902–1982),<sup>9</sup> is still in operation and specialises in fine reproductions of ukiyo-e prints.



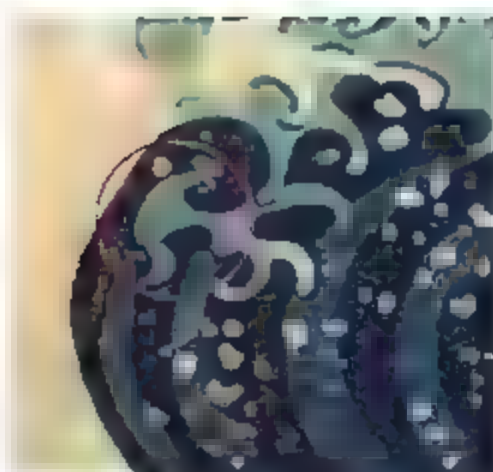
## Type 3 Reproductions



10a-c

(a) Full view

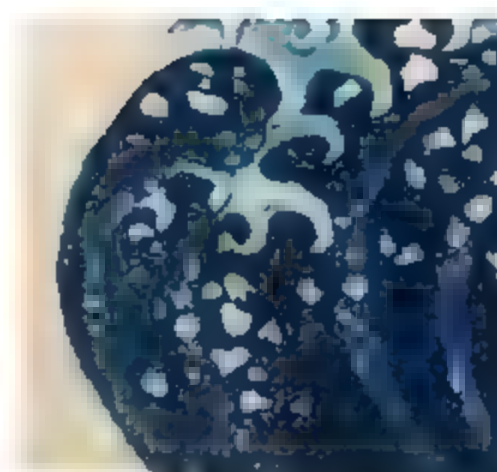
10a



10b

(b) Light-blue shape in the bottom left corner

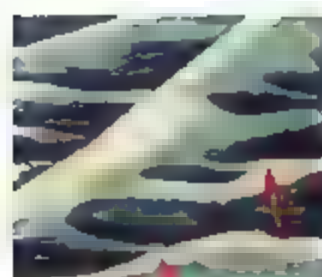
Library of Congress, Library of Congress control no 2008660168, CCo 1.0 Universal



10c

(c) This light-blue shape is absent in original impressions

Metropolitan Museum of Art, accession no JP 3569, CCo 1.0 Universal



11a-c

(a) The block-cutter has omitted some lines in the sea in Type 3 Reproductions

Library of Congress, Library of Congress control no 2008660168, CCo 1.0 Universal



(b) The absence of lines in late original impressions of *The Great Wave* was caused by woodblock wear



(c) Compare with an early original impression

## Type 4 (fig. 12a-c)

### Characteristics

- (1) Different light-blue shapes in the sea, particularly in the right-hand corner
- (2) Copied from late impressions printed using a replacement woodblock for light-blue areas

### Earliest Acquisition

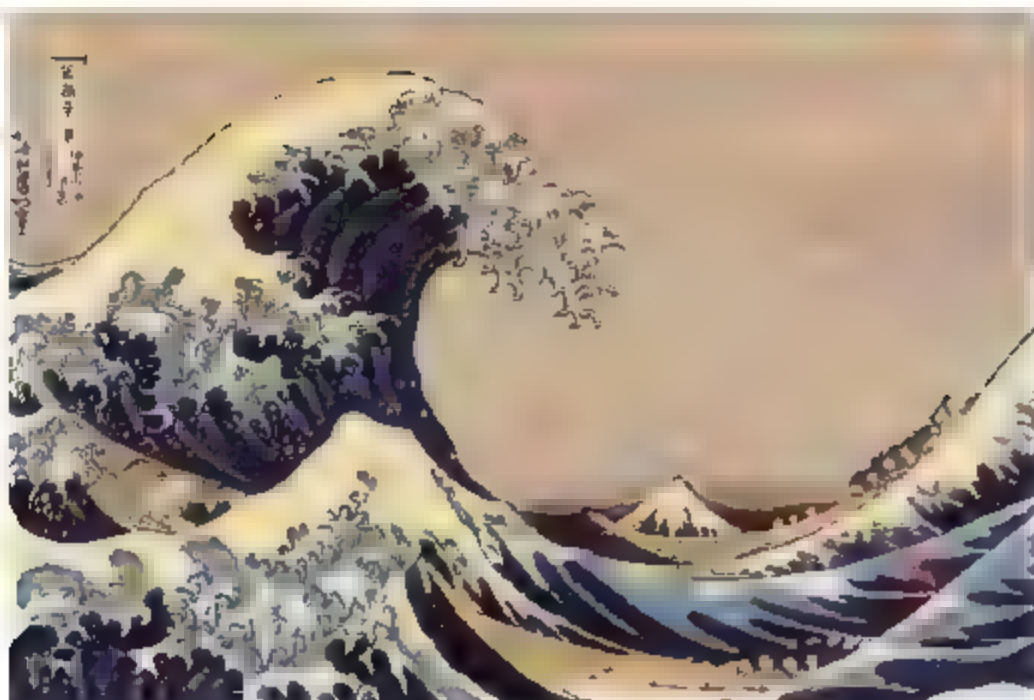
Library of Congress, 1938; its database indicates that these prints were produced by Takamizawa after 1890\*

### Collections

Library of Congress (Washington, DC), Centre Céramique Maastricht, Museo Nazionale d'Arte Orientale 'Giuseppe Tucci' (Rome)

\*The Takamizawa publishing firm, founded in the late 1910s, is still in operation and specialises in fine reproductions of *ukiyo-e* prints.<sup>14</sup>





12a.

12a-c.

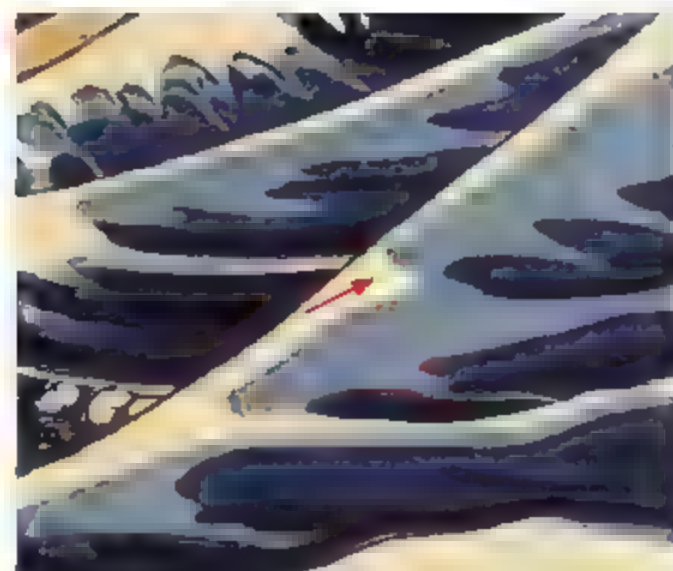
#### Type 4 Reproductions

(a) Full view; (b) detail of the light-blue shapes

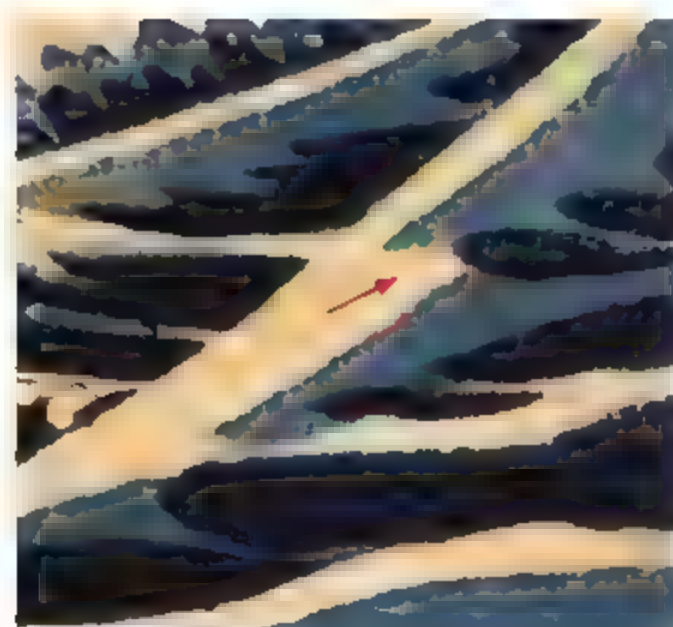
Library of Congress, Library of Congress control no 2008661021, CC0 1.0 Universal

(c) Compare with the blue shapes of an original impression

Harvard Art Museums/Arthur M. Sackler Museum. Gift of Dr. Denman W. Ross, accession no. 1916.685, CC0 1.0 Universal



12b



12c.

### Type 5 (fig. 13)

#### Characteristics

- (1) Different cloud shape\*
- (2) Different straw mats in distant boat
- (3) Light-blue shapes in the sea have uneven edges, which are smooth in originals

#### Earliest Acquisition

Museo Nacional de Artes Decorativas (Madrid), 1916

#### Collections

Blackburn Museum and Art Gallery (UK); l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient (Paris), Museo Nacional de Artes Decorativas (Madrid), Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya (Barcelona); Dunedin Public Art Gallery (New Zealand)

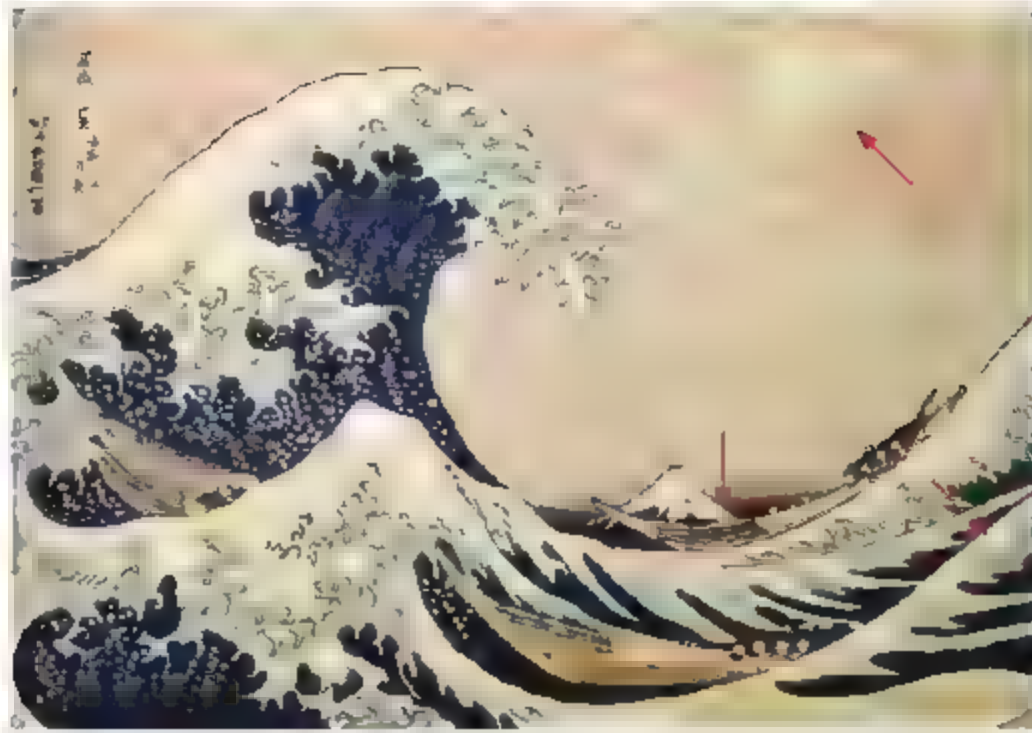
\* In several reproductions the cloud is not visible because the colour of the sky has faded



13.

**Type 5 Reproductions**

Blackburn Museum and Art Gallery  
Accession no. LC1024  
© Blackburn Museum and Art  
Gallery



**Type 6 (fig. 14)**

**Characteristics\***

- (1) Finger-like shape pointing downwards out of the cloud
- (2) Light-grey stubble on the heads of the fishermen

**Earliest Acquisition**

Pushkin Museum, 1948

**Collections**

Pushkin Museum (Moscow), Museu Nacional de Belas Artes (Rio de Janeiro)\*\*

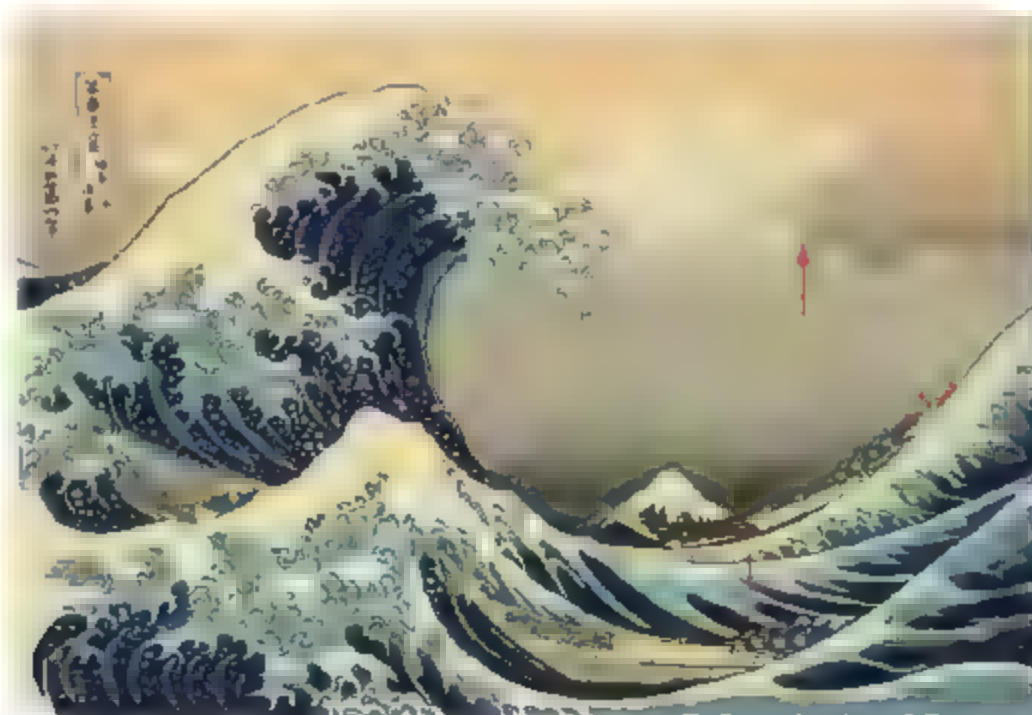
\* Very similar reproductions are still made by Fukui Asahido Co, Ltd. in Tokyo.

\*\* Most of the collection of the Museu Nacional de Belas Artes was tragically destroyed in a fire in 2018; it is unknown whether this print survived.

14.

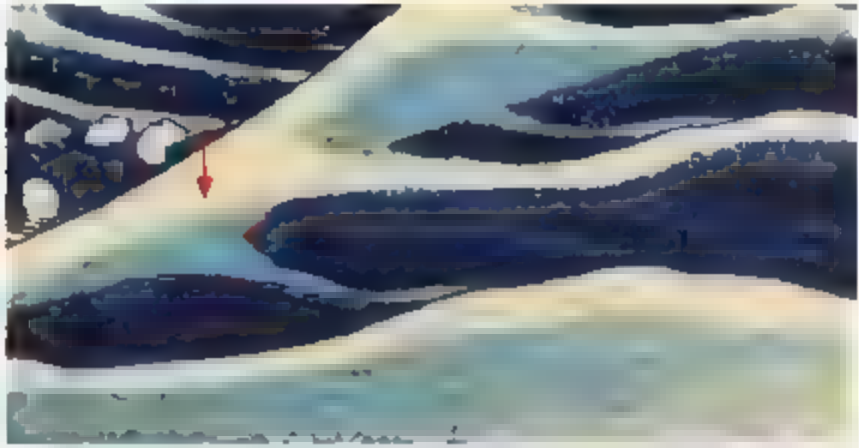
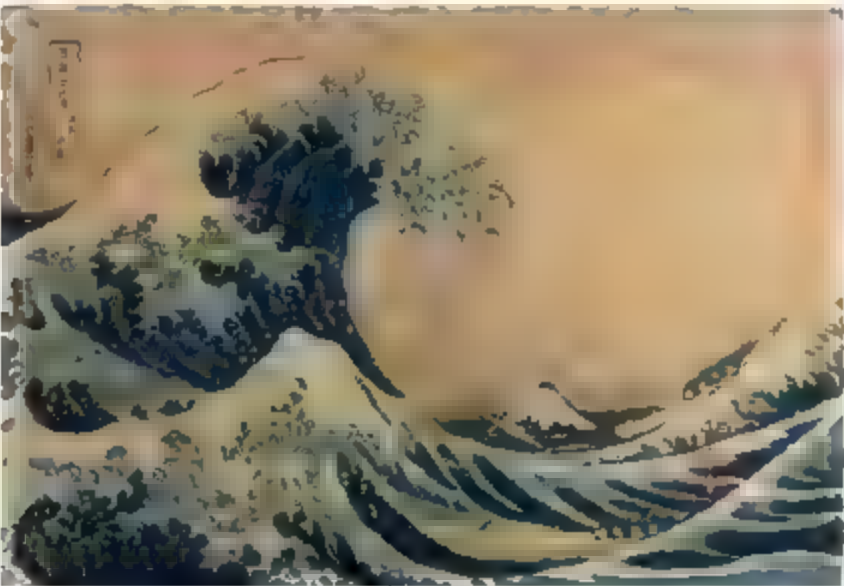
**Type 6 Reproductions**

Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts  
Accession no. A-3-202  
© Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts



**Type 7** (fig. 15a–b)

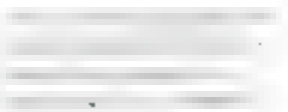
Characteristics*	Earliest Acquisition	Collections
(1) Slightly different shapes of the light-blue areas in the sea (2) Copied from rather early impressions	Archives départementales des Hautes-Alpes (Gap, France), 1937	Harvard Art Museums (Cambridge, US) ; Archives départementales des Hautes-Alpes (Gap, France)



15a–b.

**Type 7 Reproductions**

(a) Full view; the light-blue shapes in the sea are different from those in original impressions



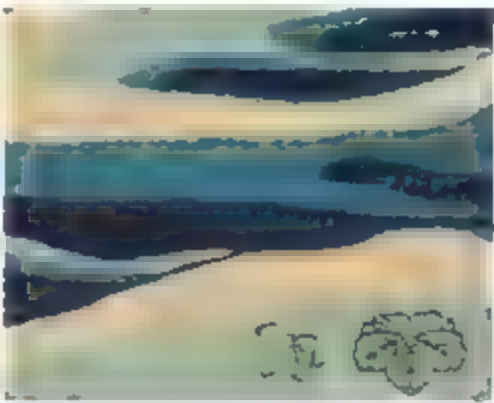
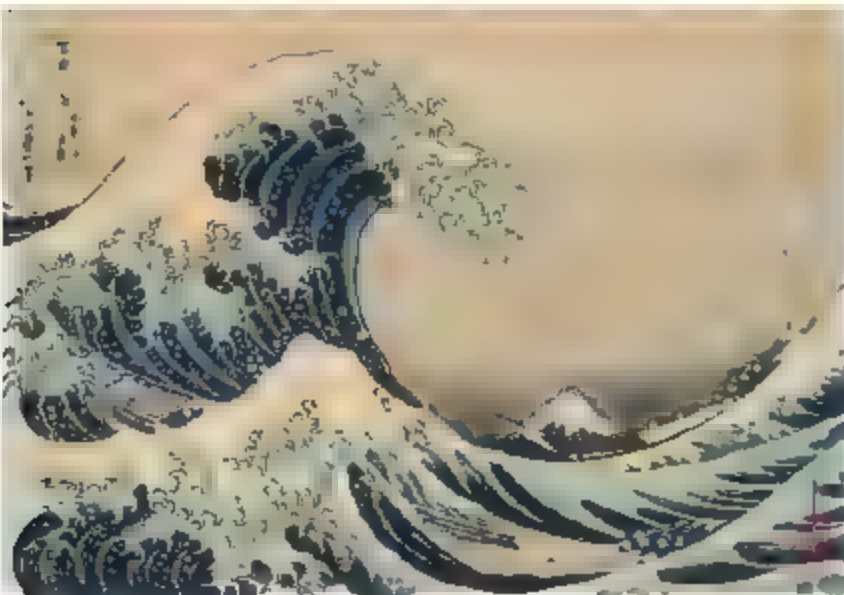
(b) Compare with the light-blue shapes in the bottom right-hand side corner in an original impression



© The Trustees of the British Museum

**Type 8** (fig. 16a–b)

Characteristics*	Earliest Acquisition	Collections
(1) These prints have the ivy-leaf shaped seal of Kobayashi Bunshichi (1862–1923) (2) The key-block lines are reproduced with a very high degree of accuracy	The seal on the prints were used by Kobayashi Bunshichi, indicating a date of 1923 or earlier*	Free Library of Philadelphia; Bibliothèque nationale de France (Paris); Baltimore Museum of Art



16a–b.

**Type 8 Reproductions**

(a) Full view; (b) detail of the Kobayashi Bunshichi seal





## Concluding Remarks

A detailed examination of the originals and reproductions of *The Great Wave* has led to the discovery of specific features present in originals but absent in reproductions. An identification of these features should enable us to distinguish between original prints and reproductions. I also noticed similarities between several reproductions, making it clear that they had been printed with the same set of reproduction woodblocks. For each of the eight reproduction types noted, I have highlighted characteristic differences from the original print in order to provide a definitive comparison that will hopefully assist scholars, collectors and art lovers in drawing distinctions between original impressions and reproductions, and to address the current confusion regarding extant impressions. The considerable number of reproduction types reflects the great demand for representations of *The Great Wave* and highlights its importance in popular culture.

## NOTES

1 The event is postponed until August 2021 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. This poster can be viewed online, <https://gtimg.tokyo2020.org/image/upload/production/ilgqpb15ksooinisx7uf.pdf>, accessed 24 August 2020.

2 Timothy Clark, ed., *Hokusai: Beyond the Great Wave*, Thames & Hudson Ltd, London 2017, 109.

3 Capucine Korenberg, 'The Making and Evolution of Hokusai's Great Wave', in Timothy Clark and Angus Lockyer, *Late Hokusai: Thought, Technique, Society*, British Museum Press, London, 2021 (forthcoming). A summary of this work can be found online at <https://blog.britishmuseum.org/the-great-wave-spot-the-difference/>, accessed 15 July 2020. In the present article, the term 'impression' refers to one of a number of printings of the same design made at different times from the same set of woodblocks (or at least the same key block). A 'reproduction' is an impression made from a completely different set of woodblocks. The results presented in this article are entirely my own, I accept responsibility for any errors or oversights.

4 The two *Great Wave* prints displayed (rotated to limit their exposure to light) as originals in the 2018–2019 exhibition *Montagne et paysage dans l'estampe japonaise* at the Musée de l'Ancien Evêché in Grenoble, France, were reproductions: one belonged to l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient and the other was from the Archives départementales des Hautes-Alpes (accession no. 1140/16). The print in figure 23.1 in David Bell, *Hokusai and Fuji: Cognition, Convention and Pictorial Invention in Japanese Pictorial Arts*, in *The Cambridge Handbook of the Psychology of Aesthetics and the Arts*, Cambridge Handbooks in Psychology, edited by Pablo P.L. Tinio, Jeffrey K. Smith, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2014, 563, is a reproduction of *The Great Wave*. The illustration for *The Great Wave* in the e-book, Peter Russell, *Delphi Collected Works of Katsushika Hokusai*, Delphi Publishing, Hastings, 2019, is also a reproduction.

5 A demonstration on how the woodblocks were block-cut and then used to produce *The Great Wave* can be viewed online at <https://youtu.be/TeLmx1-1r24>, accessed 15 July 2020.

6 Julia Meech, *Frank Lloyd Wright and the Art of Japan: The Architect's Other Passion*, Harry N. Abrams, New York, 2000, 142–50.

7 A photograph of this impression (accession no. JP2972) can be seen online at <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/56353>, accessed 15 July 2020.

8 Korenberg, 'The Making and Evolution of Hokusai's Great Wave'

9 David Bull, *The Great Wave* Part 15 video, <https://mokuhan.com/hokusai/videos.php>, accessed 15 July 2020.

<sup>10</sup> I have opted for the term ‘type’ over ‘state’ here since the latter is typically used to distinguish between impressions made from the original set of woodblocks versus subsequent sets, either those made with added or omitted blocks or, as in the case of the reproductions in the present article, those made from completely recut sets of blocks. ‘Type’ therefore refers to the various sets of entirely recut blocks used to make the eight variants of reproduction prints discussed here

<sup>11</sup> Roger Keyes and Peter Morse, ‘Hokusai’s Waterfalls and a Set of Copies’, *Oriental Art* vol. XVIII, no. 2 (Summer 1972): 141–47

<sup>12</sup> Edward F. Strange, *Tools and Materials Illustrating the Japanese Method of Colour-Printing, A Descriptive Catalogue of a Collection Exhibited in the Museum, Victoria & Albert Museum Department of Engraving, Illustration and Design, London, 1924*

<sup>13</sup> Helen Merritt and Nanako Yamada, *Guide to Modern Japanese Woodblock Prints: 1900–1975*, University of Hawai‘i Press, Honolulu, 1992, 215.

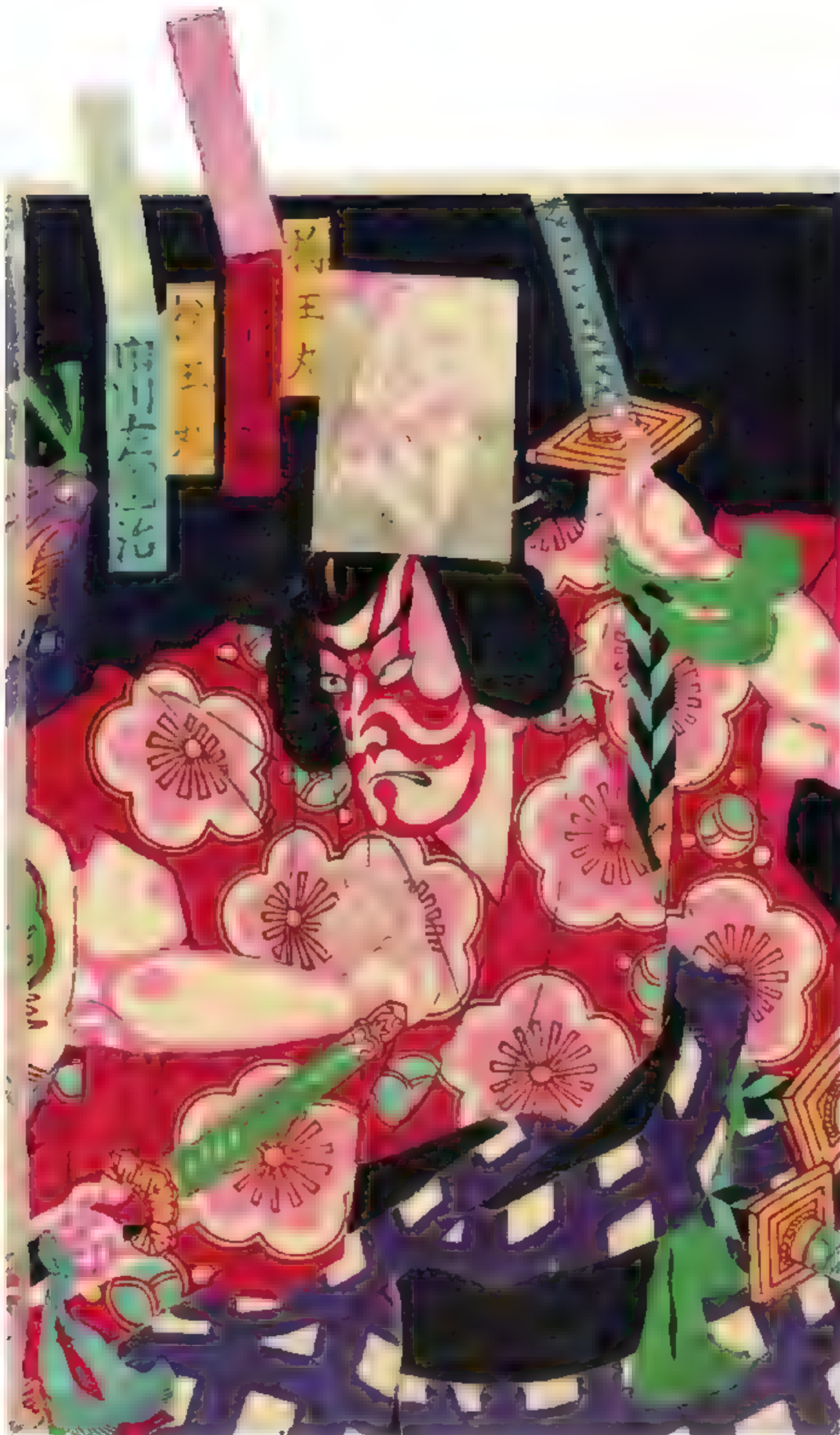
<sup>14</sup> Merritt and Yamada, *Guide to Modern Japanese Woodblock Prints*, 219.

<sup>15</sup> Merritt and Yamada, *Guide to Modern Japanese Woodblock Prints*, 217.



# A Brief Note on *Shikake-e* Woodblock Prints

*Shikake-e* (仕掛絵 'trick pictures') represent one of the quirkiest genres of *ukiyo-e* prints. In these works, a small piece of paper is pasted along one edge of an image (i.e., 'edge-pasted') and when the pasted paper is turned over or lifted up, a new scene or detail on the original sheet appears under the flap (fig. 1). *Shikake-e* prints are closely linked with the world of kabuki. In the majority of these examples, the face of one actor is pasted onto that of another. When a scheduled actor became ill and was unable to perform, or if more than one actor played a particular role, a printed image with another actor's face and name was edge-pasted onto the print over the original image. This was far less expensive than block-cutting a new print.



1.  
Detail of a shikake-e with  
paper flap lifted (see fig.  
5a–b for full triptych)

(All images illustrated here  
are woodblock prints in the  
ōban format (c. 38 × 26 cm  
and are from the author's  
collection)



Another type of *shikake-e* includes programmes for a day's performance that show the entire playhouse. In such works, several pieces of paper with the actors' faces would be pasted in the centre of the original sheet over what is intended to be the stage (see fig. 9a–b). *Shikake-e* are occasionally called *hayagawari-e* (早変絵 'quick-change pictures') because some illustrate scenes in which the actors quickly change costumes on stage or *komochi-e* (子持絵 'baby print pictures') because the pasted images are small like babies.

This article deals with *shikake-e* prints produced in Tokyo and based on my own research and collection. The Edo/Tokyo print designers who created these prints were the Utagawa artists Toyokuni III (Kunisada), Kuniyoshi and Kunichika in the Edo period (1603–1868) and in the Meiji period (1868–1912) the Utagawa artists Kunimasa IV (Baidō Kunimasa, Hōsai), Kunichika and his students Toyohara Chikayoshi, Morikawa Chikashige and Yōshū Chikanobu.<sup>1</sup>

On 31 October 1890, the play *A Triptych of Ueno Sights – Kawachiyama Sōshun* (*Sanpukutsu Ueno fūkei – Kawachiyama Sōshun*) opened at the Kabuki Theatre. Ichikawa Danjūrō IX (1838–1903) was scheduled to star in the drama as the main character Kawachiyama Sōshun but due to illness he was replaced at the last minute by Ichikawa Sadanji I (1842–1904).<sup>2</sup> The triptych showing Danjūrō's face had already been published and in order to address the situation Sadanji's face and name were quickly printed on a piece of paper and edge-pasted over Danjūrō's on the prints yet to be sold (fig. 2a–b). Since the version of the triptych with Danjūrō's face had been issued before the production, copies without *shikake-e* were circulated and can still be found today.

In November 1878, the Shintomī Theatre hired the most famous actors of the era for a new production of the *Chūshingura* (Treasury of Loyal Retainers). The *Kabuki nenpyō* (Chronology of Kabuki) notes that 'every actor changes until the seventh act' in the roles of the main characters Enya Hangan and Ōboshi Yuranosuke.<sup>3</sup> This means that the actors staging these roles differed each day. Ichikawa Danjūrō IX, Onoe Kikugorō V (1844–1903), Nakamura Sōjūrō III (1835–1889), Ichikawa Sadanji I and Bandō Kakitsu I (1847–1893) were Enya Hangan. Sōjūrō III, Danjūrō IX, Kikugorō V, Nakamura Nakazō III (1809–1896) and Sadanji I were Ōboshi Yuranosuke. Four pieces of paper are edge-pasted on all of the actors' faces, allowing viewers to see the actors performing on a particular day by lifting up the flap (fig. 3a–e). The labour-intensive production required to produce these works is not something that can be imagined today. Although Meiji woodblock prints are still considered by some as inferior in terms of design and in terms of the quality of printing when compared to prints from the Edo period, these sophisticated *shikake-e* can be seen as the acme of an art form that was intended to entertain the common people.

The New Year production opening on 12 January 1881 at Shintomī Theatre included the scenes of 'Tadanobu the Fox' (*Kitsune Tadanobu*), Act IV from *Yoshitsune and the Thousand Cherry Trees* (*Yoshitsune senbonzakura*), and *Sugawara and the Secrets of Calligraphy* (*Sugawara denju tenarai kagami*). The *Kabuki nenpyō* records that, 'From the first act [the 'Jōshō' scene, 'Jōshō' referring to *Sugawara Michizane*] until the end, actors change every day, and the production is as good as last year's *Treasury of Loyal Retainers* (*Chūshingura*)'. The four actors performing 'Tadanobu the Fox' also assumed the roles of Yoshitsune in *Yoshitsune and the Thousand Cherry Trees* (fig. 4a–c): Tadanobu the fox by Kikugorō V, Sōjūrō III, Sadanji I, Danjūrō IX, and Yoshitsune by



2a-b  
Toyohara Kunichika  
A Triptych of Ueno Sights  
— Kawachiyama Soshun  
(Sanpukatsui Ueno fukei  
— Kawachiyama Soshun),  
performed October 1890,  
Kabuki Theatre, published  
by Fukuda Kumajirō

(a) Ichikawa Danjūrō IX as  
Kawachiyama Sōshun



(b) Ichikawa Sadanji I as  
Kawachiyama Sōshun





32 2

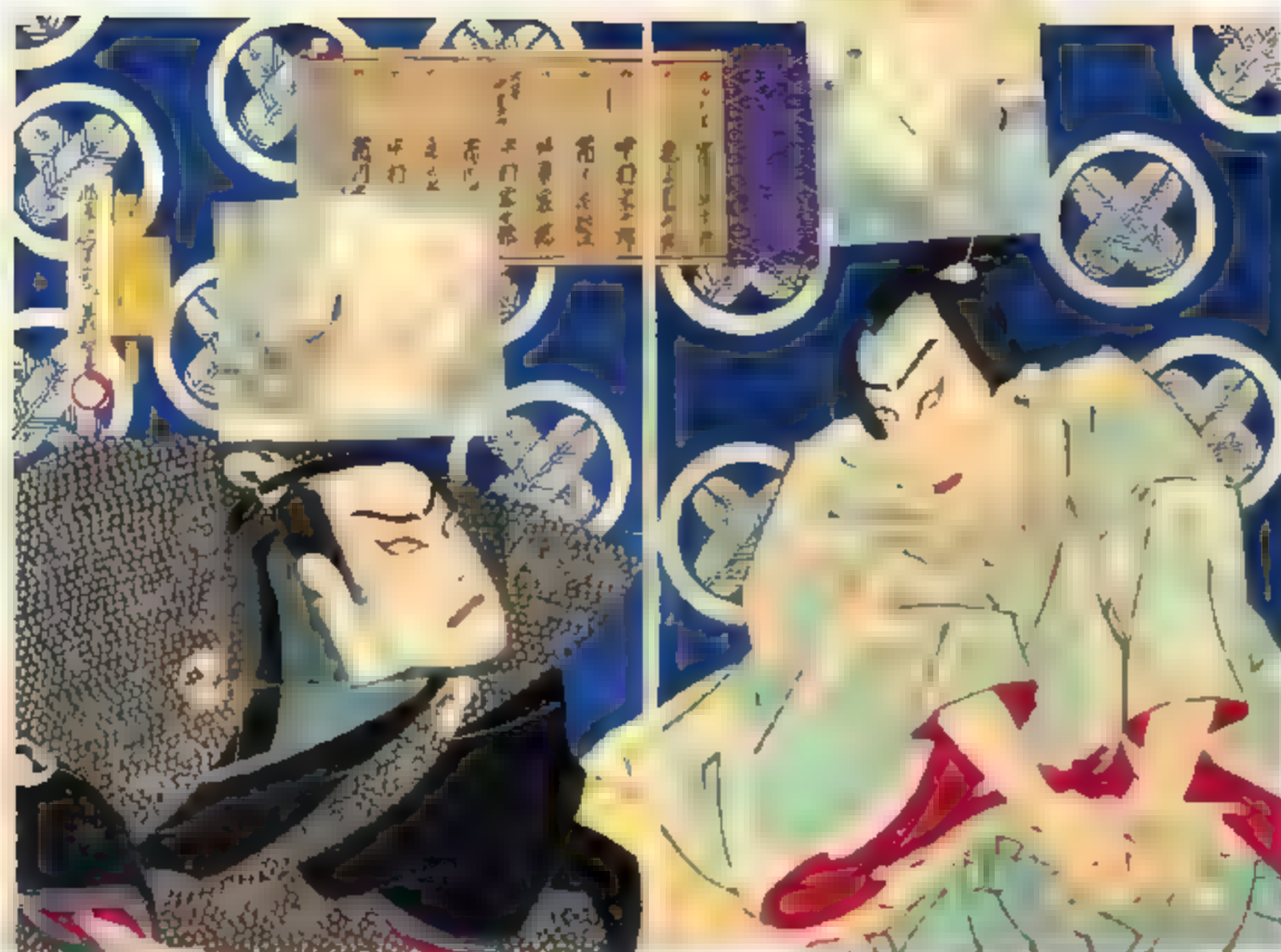
Toyohara Chikayoshi  
Treasury of Loyal Retainers  
(*Chushingura*), performed  
November 1878, Shintomi  
Theatre, published by  
Fukuda Kumajiro

(a) Ichikawa Danjuro IX  
as Enya Hangan (R) and  
Nakamura Sôjuro III as  
Ôboshi Yuranosuke (L)

Danjûrô's face and name  
appears on the right with  
Nakamura Sôjûrô III's on  
the left (their names appear  
in the above list as first and  
sixth, respective y).



(b) Onoe Kikugorô V as  
Enya Hangan (R) and  
Ichikawa Danjûrô IX as  
Ôboshi Yuranosuke (L)



(c) Nakamura Sojuro III  
as Enya Hangan (R) and  
Onoe Kikugoro V as Ōboshi  
Yuranosuke (L)



(d) Ichikawa Sadanji I  
as Enya Hangan (R) and  
Nakamura Nakazō as  
Ōboshi Yuranosuke (L)





(e) Bando Kakitsu I as Enya  
Hangan (R) and Ichikawa  
Sadaji I as Ōboshi  
Yuranosuke (L)

Danjūrō IX, Sōjūrō III, Kikugorō V and Sadanji I. The order in which the pieces of paper were pasted onto the image does not assist us, however, in confirming which actors were actually acting together on stage

The triptych for the above performance of *Sugawara and the Secrets of Calligraphy*, represents, like the diptych for the *Chushingura* play (see fig. 3a–e), an unusual example of how two *shikake-e* are made for two plays of the same production staged in the same month (fig. 5a–b). The names of the actors are mentioned on the vertical labels. Kikugorō V plays Sakuramaru, Sōjūrō III is Shihei, Sadanji I is Matsuōmaru and Danjūrō IX is Umeōmaru. The edge-pasted label that would have covered Kikugorō's name is today lost and the name of the second actor cannot be identified. The other actors mentioned on the labels are Ichikawa Sumizō V (as Shihei),

Arashi Rikan IV (as Matsuōmaru) and Kataoka Gadō III (as Umeōmaru). Although the print portrays the leading actors and lists their names, the pieces of edge-pasted paper illustrate less famous actors. It is thus difficult to identify the actor who played Sakuramaru in Kikugorō's place. We also do not know why less popular actors took turns in the main roles in *Sugawara and the Secrets of Calligraphy* while the leading actors in the principal roles in, 'Tadanobu the Fox', changed each day.

Another *shikake-e* print depicts a scene from *The Tenth Act of the Taikōki* (*Taikōki judanme*) (fig. 6a–b),<sup>4</sup> a drama that centres on the historical figure of Akechi Mitsuhide (1528–1582), the sworn enemy of the warlord Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1537–1598). For the performance of *The Tenth Act* at the Ichimura Theatre from 1 August 1865, Bandō Hikosaburō V (1832–1877) plays Mitsuhide and Ichimura



43 上

(a) Yashu Chikanobu  
*'Tadanobu the Fox'* (*Kitsune Tadanobu*), Act IV of the  
*Yoshitsune and the Thousand Cherry Trees* (*Yoshitsune senbonzakura*), performed  
 January 1881, Shintomi  
 Theatre, published by  
 Fukuda Kumajiro

(a) (right to left): Ichikawa  
 Danjurō IX as Minamoto no  
 Yoshitsune, Iwai Hanshirō  
 IV as Shizuka Gozen and  
 Onoe Kikugorō V as Kitsune  
 (Fox) Tadanobu

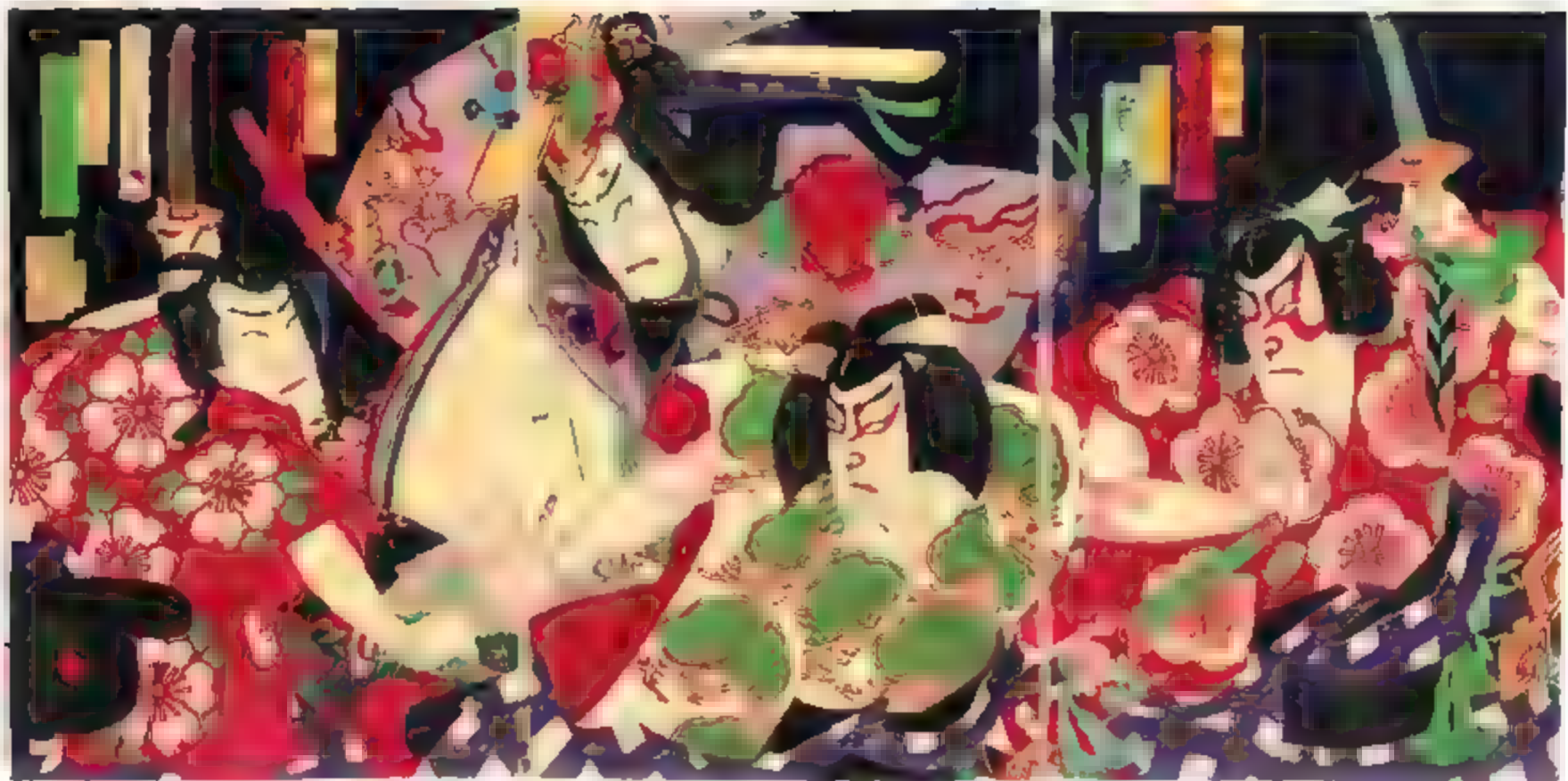


(b) Nakamura Sōjūrō III  
 (L), Ichikawa Sadanji I (C)  
 and Ichikawa Danjurō IX  
 (R) as Tadanobu the Fox



(c) Nakamura Sōjūrō III  
 (L), Onoe Kikugorō V (C)  
 and Ichikawa Sadanji I (R)  
 in the role of Yoshitsune





5a-b.

Morikawa Chikashige  
*Sugawara and the Secrets of  
 Calligraphy (Sugawara denju  
 tenarai kagami)*, performed  
 January 1881, Shintomi  
 Theatre, published by  
 Fukuda Kumajirō

(a) (right to left): Kataoka  
 Gadō III as Umeōmaru,  
 Arashi Rikan IV as  
 Matsuōmaru, Ichikawa  
 Sumizō V as Shihei and  
 an unidentified actor as  
 Sakuramaru

(b) (right to left): Ichikawa  
 Danjūrō IX as Umeōmaru,  
 Ichikawa Sadanji I as  
 Matsuōmaru, Nakamura  
 Sōjūrō III as Shihei and  
 Onoe Kikugorō V as  
 Sakuramaru

Onoe Kikugorō V's name is  
 mentioned on the green strip  
 on the left sheet in 5a but  
 the paper flap that would  
 have indicated the name  
 change has been lost



6a-b.

Toyohara Kunichika

*The Tenth Act of the Tarkoku,*

performed eighth month,

1865, Ichimura Theatre,

published by Fukuda

Kumajiro

(a) (right to left) Bandō  
Hikosaburō V as Takechi  
Mitsuhide and Ichimura  
Kakitsu IV as Toyotomi  
Hideyoshi



(b) Bandō Hikosaburō V as  
Takechi Mitsuhide with his  
straw hat removed







7a-b.

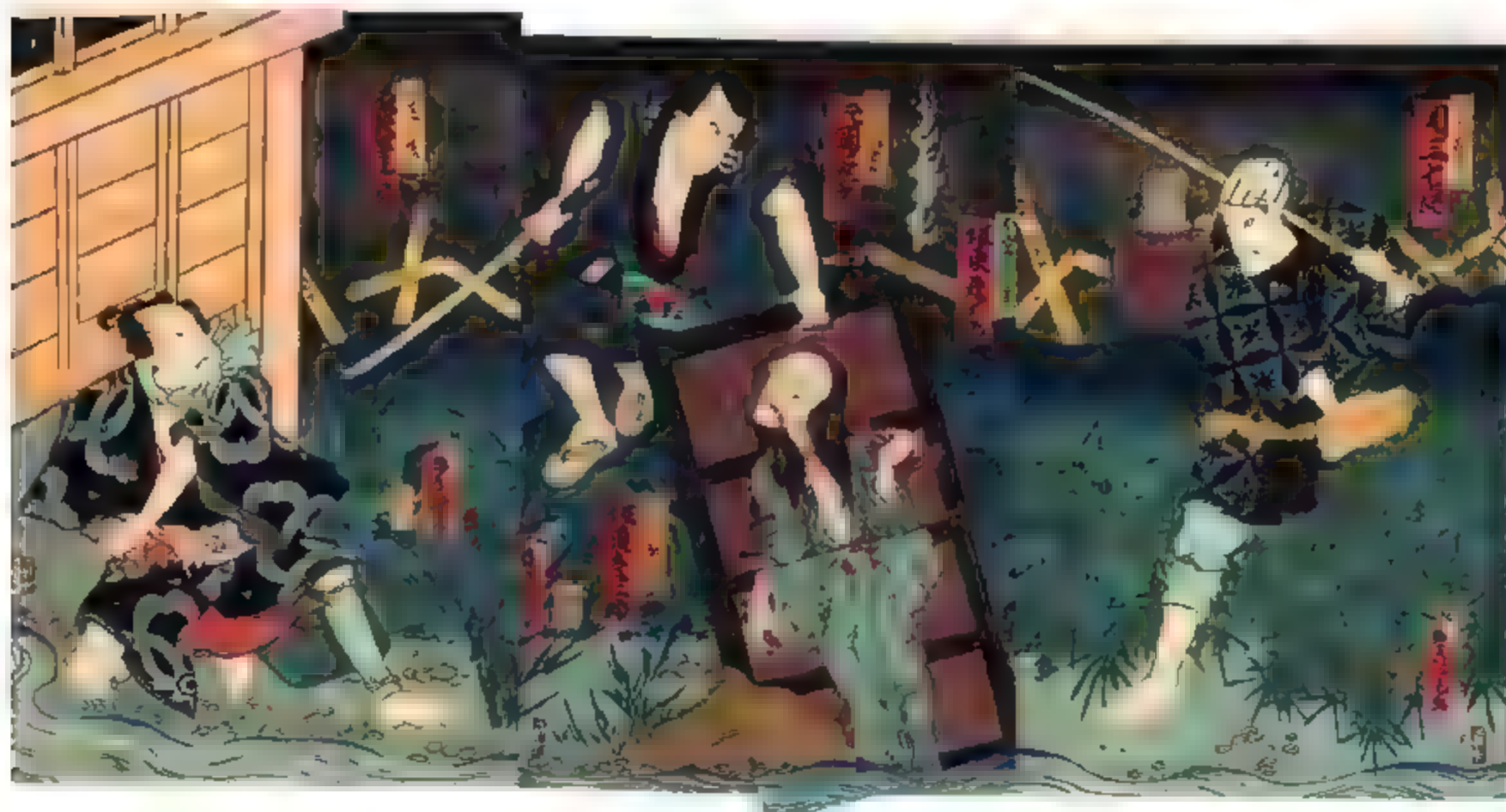
Utagawa Toyokuni III (Kunisada)

*Strange Tale at Yotsuya on the Tōkaidō (Tōkaidō Yotsuya kaidan)*, performed the seventh month, 1861, Nakamura Theatre, published by Ebisuya

(a) (right to left): Seki Sanjūrō IV as Naosuke Gonbei, Bandō Hikosaburō V as the Ghost of Kohei, Kataoka Nizaemon IX as Tamya Iemon and Bandō Hikosaburō V as Satō Yomoshichi

(b) (right to left): Seki Sanjūrō IV as Naosuke Gonbei, Bandō Hikosaburō V as the Ghost of Oiwa, Kataoka Nizaemon IX as Tamya Iemon and Bandō Hikosaburō V as Satō Yomoshichi

Hikosaburō played Oiwa, Kohei and Yomoshichi. Ordinarily Yomoshichi and Oiwa (Kohei) do not appear together on the stage but in order to show all the actors, here they are depicted together.



Kakitsu IV stars as Mitsuhide's son, Takechi Tōjirō.<sup>5</sup> The young Kakitsu was a handsome actor and enjoyed a large following. His mother was the second daughter of Onoe Kikugorō III (1784–1849) and he was expected to succeed to the renowned Kikugorō name, which he did in the eighth lunar month of 1868 with the name Onoe Kikugorō V. The opening line of the song in Act II in *The Tenth Act* begins with the words, 'the moon streams from behind the leaves and Takechi Mitsuhide appears with the moon-flowers'. Takechi Mitsuhide steps onto the stage, tossing his hat behind him. The scene represented in this *shikake-e* captures this moment (fig. 6b).

A triptych by Utagawa Toyokuni III (1786–1865) illustrates Act III of the *Strange Tale at Yotsuya on the Tōkaidō* (*Tōkaidō Yotsuya kaidan*) performed at the Nakamura Theatre in 1861 (fig. 7a–b). Bandō Hikosaburō V plays the characters of Yomoshichi, Menosuke and Shigeji as well as the ghosts of Oiwa and Kohei. Kataoka Nizaemon IX (1839–1871) is Tamiya Iemon and Seki Sanjūrō IV (1835–1889) is Naosuke Gonbei. In Act III, the dead bodies of Kohei and Oiwa are tied to either side of a door thrown into a moat. When the door is pulled out of the water, Kohei's corpse is seen first, but Oiwa's lifeless body is revealed when the door is turned over. Although this is the most celebrated example of a 'quick costume change' (*hayagawari*), this *shikake-e* is based on a single-sheet print by Toyokuni III that depicts a staging of the *Strange Tale at Yotsuya on the Tokaido* at the Ichimura Theatre in August 1831.<sup>6</sup> I believe that Toyokuni III's work is the earliest documented *shikake-e*. In the production illustrated in Toyokuni III's work, Kataoka Gadō III (1851–1895) is Tamiya Iemon and Ichikawa Kuzō III (1836–1911) is Naosuke Gonbei. Kunisada's student, Toyohara Kunichika (1835–1900), also created a dramatic portrayal of this brutal scene (fig. 8a–b).

Many examples of *shikake-e* show the theatre stage with edge-pasted pictures that

correspond to several plays. In May 1873, the Shintomi Theatre presents the plays *Fine Days in May with a Morning Breeze at Ueno* (*Satsukibare Ueno no asakaze*), *New Story of Tea*, *Admiring Cherry Blossoms* (*Hanamidō shinchayawa*), *The Subscription List* (*Kanjinchō*) and *Castle of the Vanguard of the Ōmi Genji Army* (*Ōmi Genji senjin yakata*). A woodblock print by Baidō Kunimasa (1848–1920) shows the theatre's stage during six different scenes from the four plays through the device of lifting up the flap representing the curtain: 'Battle of Ueno' (*Ueno sensō*), 'Scene behind Ueno Hill' (*Ueno ura no ba*), 'Mikawashima', 'Eight Aspects of the Buddha' (*Shaka hassō*), 'The Subscription List' (*Kanjinchō*) and 'Ōmi Genji' (fig. 9a–b).<sup>7</sup> The unifying theme is the battle of the elite pro-Tokugawa shogunal military unit Shōgitai against the imperial forces on Ueno Hill. It was reported that about fifty survivors of the Shōgitai unit and their relatives attended the performance, and all the spectators refrained from drinking as a sign of respect.<sup>8</sup> This print is probably a work published as an advertisement for the Shintomi Theatre.

Another example of theatre scenes is Utagawa Toyokuni III's triptych *A Picture of the Thriving Grand Theatre* (fig. 10a–b). This work is unusual because the additional print is not edge-pasted onto the original sheet. Instead, it is simply pasted above the top border of the underlying centre sheet as if it were a stage curtain. This arrangement is accommodated by the centre sheet being about 2.54 cm shorter than the usual oban size (c. 38 × 26 cm) seen in the companion right and left sheets. The seal of this triptych indicates a date of the sixth month of 1859 but this scene was probably an imagined production since there is no record of a performance of *Sugawara's and the Secrets of Calligraphy* that month. Ichikawa Kodanji IV (1812–1866) stars as Shihei, Nakamura Fikusuke I (1839–1860) is Matsuōmaru, Kawarazaki Gonjūrō I (Ichikawa

8a–b. (opposite page)

Toyohara Kunichika

*Keepsake Flowers:*

*Ghost Stories at Yotsuya*

(*Kotamigusa Yotsuya*

*kaidan*), performed October

1884, Ichimura Theatre,

published by Fukuda

Kumajiro

(a) (right to left): Ichikawa

Kuzō III as Naosuke

Gonbei, Kataoka Gadō III

as Tamiya Iemon and Onoe

Kikugorō V as Yomoshichi

(b) Kunichika was a

specialist of 'bust portraits'

(*ōkubi-e*); he owes a

compositional debt to

Toyokuni III's illustration

of the scene (see fig. 7a–b)

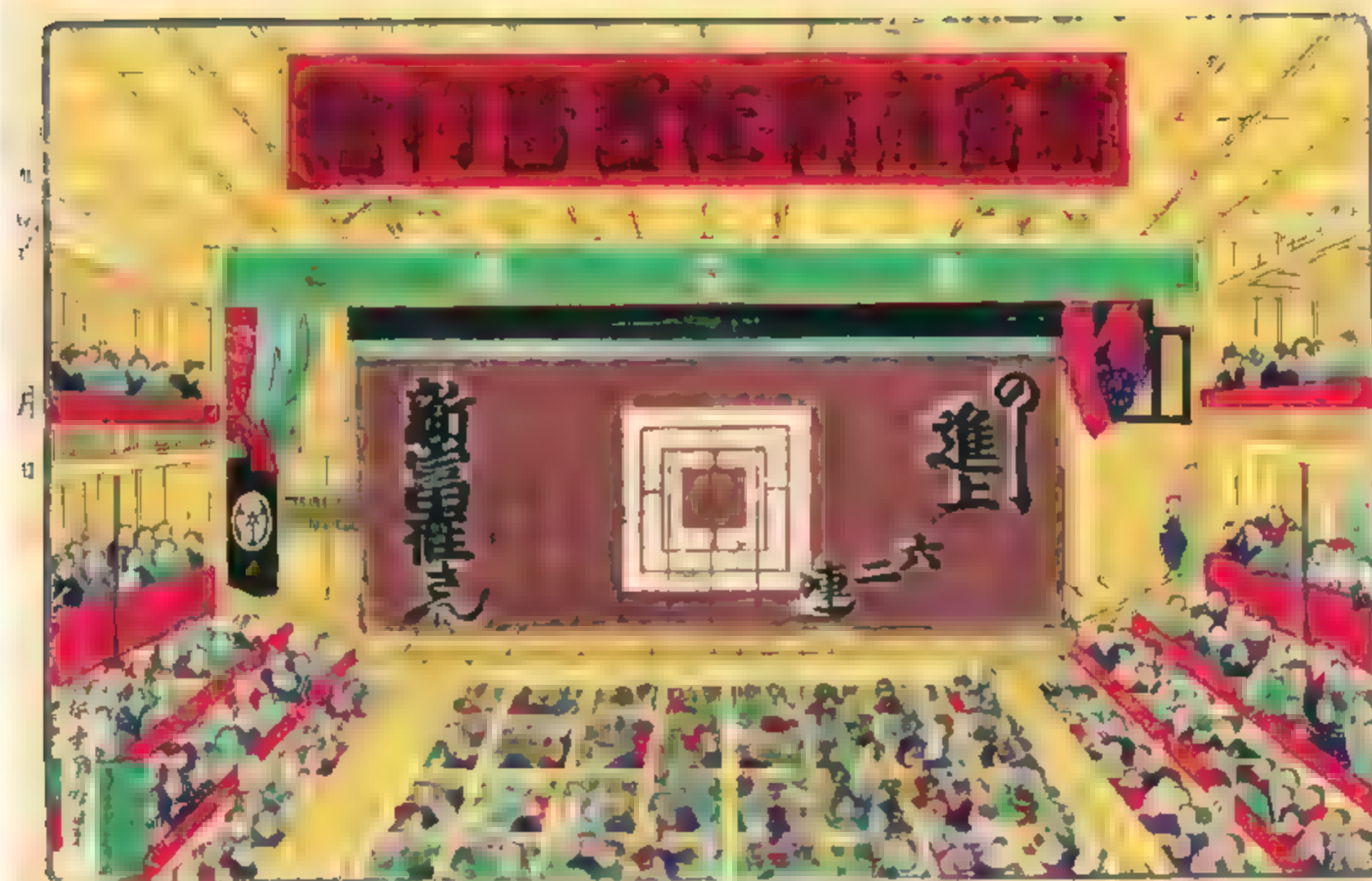
but here he depicts the

figures of the actors in

three-quarter view.









9a-b. (opposite page)

Baido Kunimasa

*A Changing Picture of*

*New Performances at*

*the Shintom Theatre*

(*Shintomiza shin kyogen*

*kawan-e*), performed May

1890, Shintom Theatre,

published by Fukuda

Kumajiro

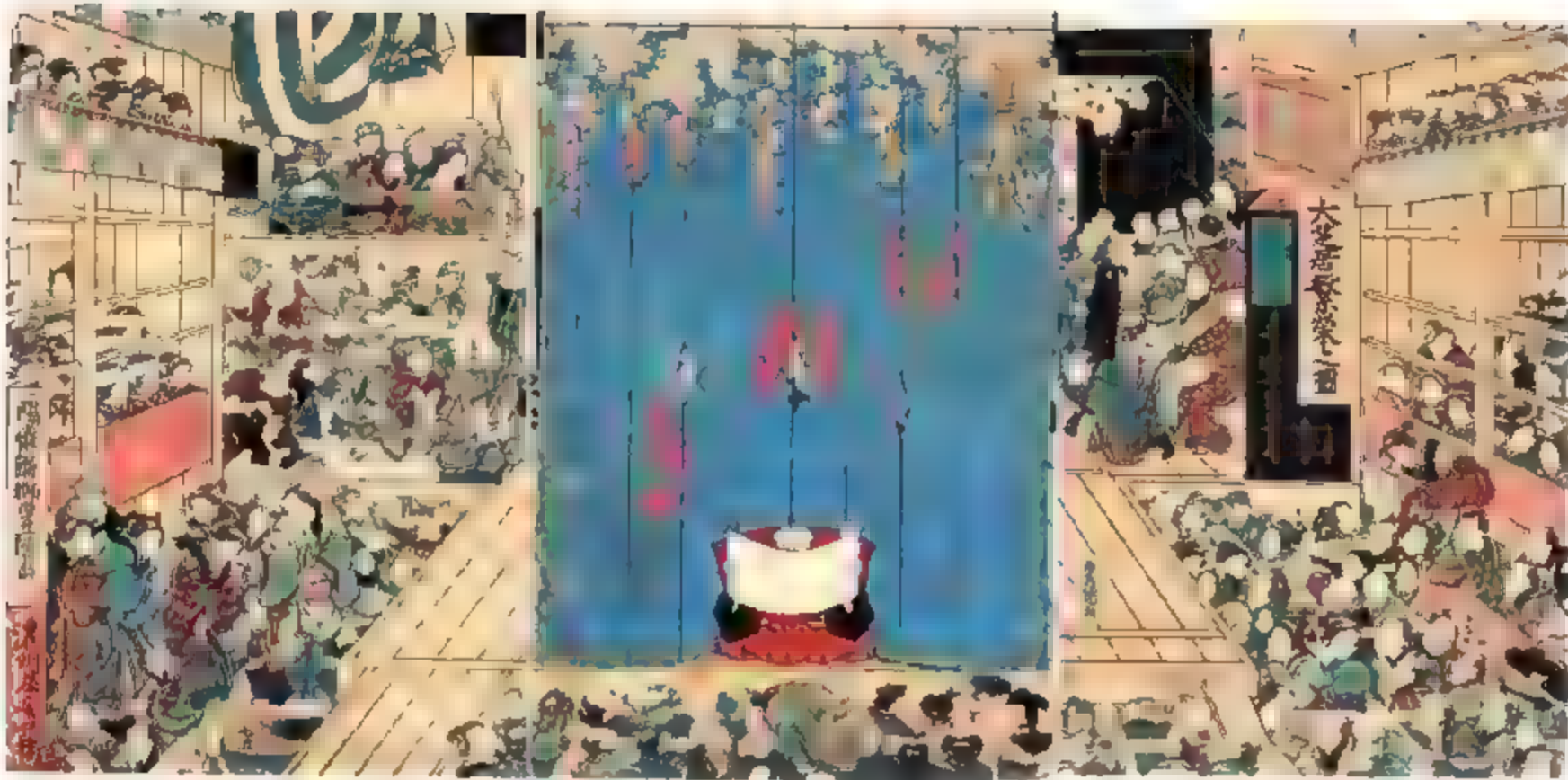
(a) View of the stage with  
the curtain closed

(b) A staging of the 'Battle  
of Ueno'

Danjūrō IX) is Umeōmaru and Bandō Hikosaburō V is Sakuramaru.<sup>9</sup> The curtain is inscribed with the word *hiki* (patron), which signifies that it was offered by the sponsor of the theatre. Three actors look from behind the curtain at the audience inside the theatre. As the curtain rises, the 'Wheel Pulling' (*Kurumabiki*) scene of the play appears. Several triptychs with the same title are known today; their compositions are similar in that they employ the same 'curtain print' technique. This creates a feeling of anticipation and the atmosphere in the theatre before the curtain opens.

*Shikake-e* prints are a minor genre in woodblock prints and the complexity of their production meant that they were not produced in great numbers. It was far more common to cut out a section of an original woodblock and replace it with another newly block-cut plug of wood (*iregi*) with the face and costumes of another character. The most famous examples are perhaps sumo prints. It was customary to block-cut and replace the face and name of sumo wrestlers because many wrestlers had the same large body types. Consequently, the use of *iregi* in sumo prints served the same purpose as edge-pasted pieces of paper, but they are not *shikake-e* prints. As noted above, *shikake-e* are generally associated with the genre of actor prints. One pleasure in looking at actor prints is the identification of the performer's name and role. If, however, several actors competed for the same roles in the same production then the pleasure of looking is clearly amplified.





10a-b.

Utagawa Toyokuni III  
A Picture of the Thriving  
Grand Theatre (Ōshibai  
han'ei no zu), performed  
in the sixth month,  
1859, theatre unknown,  
published by Nōshūya  
Yasubei

(a) View of the stage with  
the curtain closed

(b) The curtains are open  
to reveal a performance  
of the 'Wheel Pulling'  
(Kurumabiki) scene





## NOTES

1 The only reference work on *shikake-e* is Yoshikazu Hayashi's *Edo shikake-bon ko* (Reflections on Shikake Books of the Edo Period), Anmitsu Shobo, Tokyo, 1952. Hayash records seventy-one *shikake-e* works between 1809 and 1884 but only eight *ukiyo-e* prints of this type are mentioned; the remainder are *shunpon* (erotic books). He notes that the first *shikake-e* book was *Honcho badai* (1809) with text by Santo Kyoden and illustrations by Utagawa Toyokuni I.

2 Ihara Toshiro, *Kabuki nenpyō*, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1962, vol. 7, 370–71.

3 Ihara, *Kabuki nenpyō*, vol. 7, 241.

4 There are two *Taikoki*, which are written with the characters 太閤記 and 太功記. The former is a history of Toyotomi Hideyoshi and the latter concerns Akechi Mitsuhide, the subject of the discussion here.

5 Akechi Mitsuhide assassinated Oda Nobunaga (b. 1534) in 1582. In kabuki, historical names were often modified because during the Edo period it was banned to report actual events. The name Akechi was thus changed to Takechi; it is similar to the real name and the audiences would have easily understood the reference.

6 This print can be viewed at

[https://archive.waseda.jp/archive/detail.html?arg={%22subDB\\_id%22:%2252%22,%22id%22:%22205850,1%22}&lang=jp](https://archive.waseda.jp/archive/detail.html?arg={%22subDB_id%22:%2252%22,%22id%22:%22205850,1%22}&lang=jp), accessed 16 July 2020.

7 A detailed outline of the first two appears in the pamphlet-like publication *Kabuki shimpō* (Kabuki News) (nos. 1440 & 1450, June 1890), which records the stories and details of the plays performed in Tokyo theatres. First issued in February 1879 and continuing until 1897, *Kabuki shimpō* ran to 1669 numbers. It was published every four or five days, and today is considered the most important document on kabuki plays in the Meiji period.

8 The Shōgitai fought against the imperial army at the Battle of Ueno that began on the morning of the fifteenth day of the fifth month 1868 on the Ueno Hill; their forces were soundly defeated before day's end. Any survivors fled to the north.

9 Although the names of the actors are not listed, it is possible to identify the individual actors from their facial likenesses.

# Japanese Woodblock-Printed Dioramas

Tony Cole, Robert Tauxe and Ann Herring

The tradition of paper dioramas, theatre scenes and three-dimensional paper models has existed in Europe for several centuries – even the novelist Robert Louis Stevenson (1850–1894) enjoyed building paper theatre settings as a young boy.<sup>1</sup> In Japan, too, there was a popular tradition of paper dioramas from the middle of the Edo period (1603–1868) until the early twentieth century.<sup>2</sup> These stand-up displays, colourful and populated with two-dimensional figures, recreated in miniature a fabulous array of scenes from theatre, history, myth, scenic and urban landscapes, and daily life. They were illuminated with candles and displayed outdoors, presumably to the delight of passers-by during the summer evenings, and were likely marketed to the well-off townsfolk in the major urban centres of Osaka, Kyoto and Edo (present-day Tokyo).<sup>3</sup>





1 & 1a-d.

Artist unspecified

*The Attack by the Loyal Retainers (Chūshingura uchiri)*, 1913, assembled reproduction of woodblock prints, 30 × 84 × (depth) 38 cm, published by Tsunashima Kamekichi, Tokyo

A diorama depicting two highlights from *The Copybook of the Treasury of Loyal Retainers* (*Kanadehon Chūshingura*, also seen as *Chūshingura*). One shows the kneeling Kira Kōzukenosuke Yoshinaka (1641–1703) about to be killed by Ōishi Kuranosuke (1659–1703) (centre) the leader of the vendetta. The other illustrates Kira's expert swordsman, Shimizu Ichigaku, battling two attackers on the bridge. The width of the display allows the viewer to focus on each highlight separately, with the low fence acting as a convenient divider.

Japanese paper dioramas were issued as sets of one or more woodblock prints and were assembled by fixing cut-outs of figures, buildings and background scenery onto a prepared base (figs. 1 & 1a–d). The dioramas were just one of a wide variety of cut-and-paste prints that included dress-up dolls, small trinket boxes and three-dimensional models, among others. Few cut-and-paste prints, however, were as dramatic as dioramas. Today, these diverse cut-and-paste prints are regarded as types of *omocha-e* (toy prints), an umbrella term for woodblock prints designed for amusement. The term *omocha-e* can be dated to at least the late Edo period but it is believed to have come into general use in the mid Taishō (1912–1926) and early Shōwa (1926–1989) periods.<sup>4</sup>

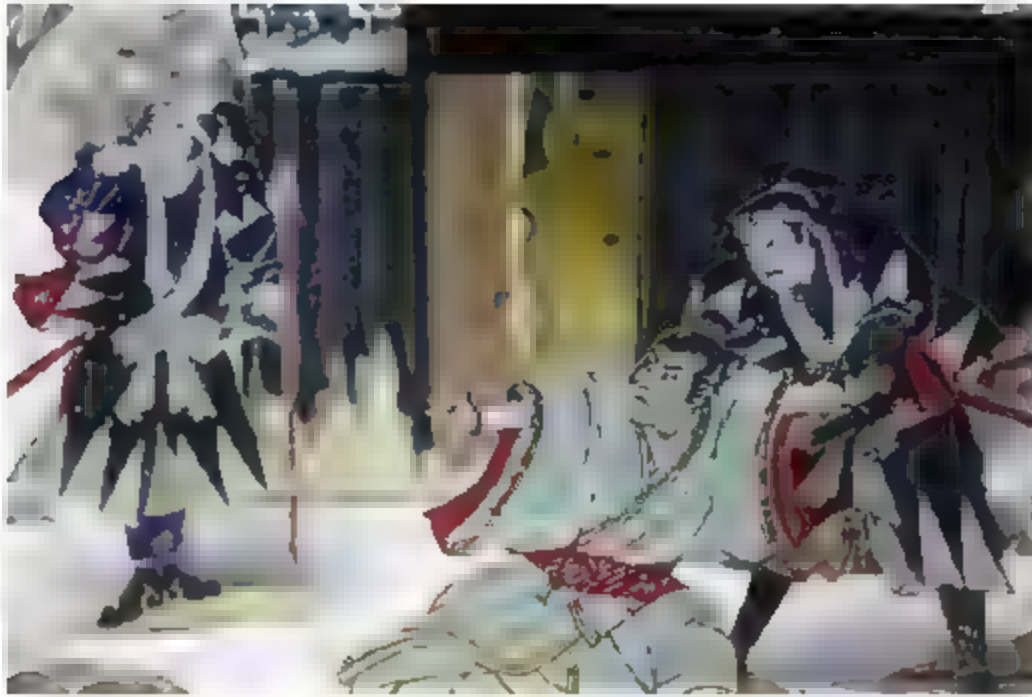
An awareness of this pastime in Japan has long since faded from public consciousness and due to their ephemeral nature surviving prints are understandably few. By contrast,



1a.



1b.



1c.



1d.

ukiyo-e (nishiki-e) woodblock prints are today icons of Japanese art. It has been suggested that ukiyo-e print collectors viewed cut-and-paste prints as the realm of toy collectors and toy collectors saw them as art prints.<sup>3</sup> The result has been a longstanding lack of published literature on cut-and-paste prints. Two notable reference works that discuss this genre are 'Tatebanko kō' (Thoughts on Construction Prints), an article written in 1966 by Osaka historian Hida Kōzō (b. 1930);<sup>4</sup> and *Kumiage-tōrō kō* (also, Thoughts on Construction Prints), a private publication from 1971 by the prominent Tokyo kabuki stage designer Takane Kōkō (1902–1979).<sup>5</sup> Despite this relative dearth of information,

a number of Japanese museums and private collections house examples as do institutions outside Japan where these prints are even less well understood.<sup>6</sup> Considering the appeal of woodblock-printed dioramas, their 'forgotten' status is thus puzzling. This article attempts to redress this standing by revealing the charm of these little-known woodblock-printed dioramas, with a focus on Osaka and Edo/Tokyo production.

## The Origins and Features of Cut-and-Paste Diorama Woodblock Prints

The terms *kirikumi-tōrō* (切組燈籠) or *kumiage-tōrō* (組上燈籠) (literally 'construction lantern'; generally translated as 'construction print') are both thought to have been the formal nomenclature in the respective centres of Osaka and Edo/Tokyo for dioramas, three-dimensional models and other cut-and-paste prints that 'stood up' when assembled.<sup>9</sup> In Osaka, they were additionally known as *tatebanko* (立版古), also translated as 'construction print'. This term, however, does not appear on any extant documented print.<sup>10</sup> *Kirikumi-tōrō*, *kumiage-tōrō* and *tatebanko* are not used in modern Japanese and therefore there is no standardised term to designate cut-and-paste prints. *Kirikumi-tōrō* and *kumiage-tōrō* remain as esoteric descriptions within the realm of amusement prints while the term *tatebanko* survives as an obscure seasonal summer term in haiku glossaries.<sup>11</sup>

It is not known precisely when the first cut-and-paste prints were produced, but it is believed that they evolved from the *tōrōkazari* (decorative paper lanterns) displayed during the Buddhist Obon Festival.<sup>12</sup> Whether intended or not, the cut and paste prints would have provided a convenient way of reproducing *tōrōkazari* designs, such as dioramas, and of making them more widely available and accessible to the public.



22-e.

Artist unspecified

*The Attack by the Loyal*

*Retainers (Chushingura*

*uchiri)*, 1913, five

woodblock-printed sheets,

each 24.6 × 36.4 cm,

published by Tsunashima

Kamekuchi, Tokyo

23.



2b.



2c.

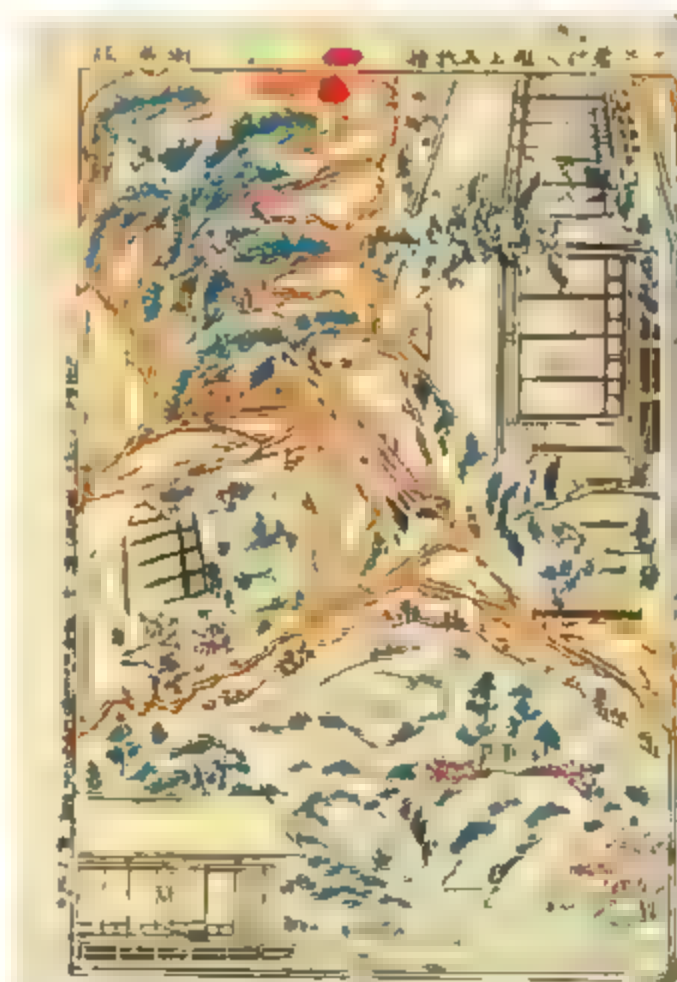


Sometime in the mid-Edo period, they became known as toy prints.<sup>13</sup> In his chronicles of Edo, *Bukō nenpyō* (pub. 1850), Saitō Gesshin (1804–1878) notes that *kirikumi-tōrō* originated in Osaka and Kyoto, and that by the Kansei era (1789–1801) they were popular in Edo.<sup>14</sup> Many of the dioramas also feature architectural structures and the knowledge to create them may have been drawn from *okoshi-e*, a separate but already well-established category of miniaturised architectural paper constructions for teahouse designs. There have also been suggestions that *kirikumi-tōrō* originated from *okoshi-e*. Another possible influence on the development of the style of dioramas was the genre of woodblock prints known as ‘perspective prints’ (*uki-e*).<sup>15</sup> It is not entirely clear why the illusion of perspective was adopted, however, since the dioramas were viewed from only one side – the front – the use of perspective would have conveniently enabled the inclusion of far-off mountains and other backdrops within the confines of the display.

Osaka *kirikumi-tōrō* and Edo *kumiage-tōrō* dioramas were principally issued as sets of woodblock prints in the *ōban* (c. 38 × 26 cm) or *hosoban* (c. 33 × 17 cm) formats. Most *ōban*-sized sets included one to five sheets (figs. 2a–e, 3a–d, 4 & 4a–c). Some had more. *Hosoban*-sized prints were generally single-sheet displays. A remarkable feature of the prints was the compact arrangement of the diverse parts on the printed sheet. The assembly of a diorama required considerable time and effort. They were printed on thin Japanese *washi* paper,<sup>16</sup> which meant that the prints had to be stiffened with a paper backing. The preparation of a suitable base was also required, as this was not included with the printed sheets. The assembler would then cut out the parts and glue the display together. Small pieces of bamboo or similar material might be needed for added strength to prevent the various parts from curling or falling over.<sup>17</sup>



2d.



2e.



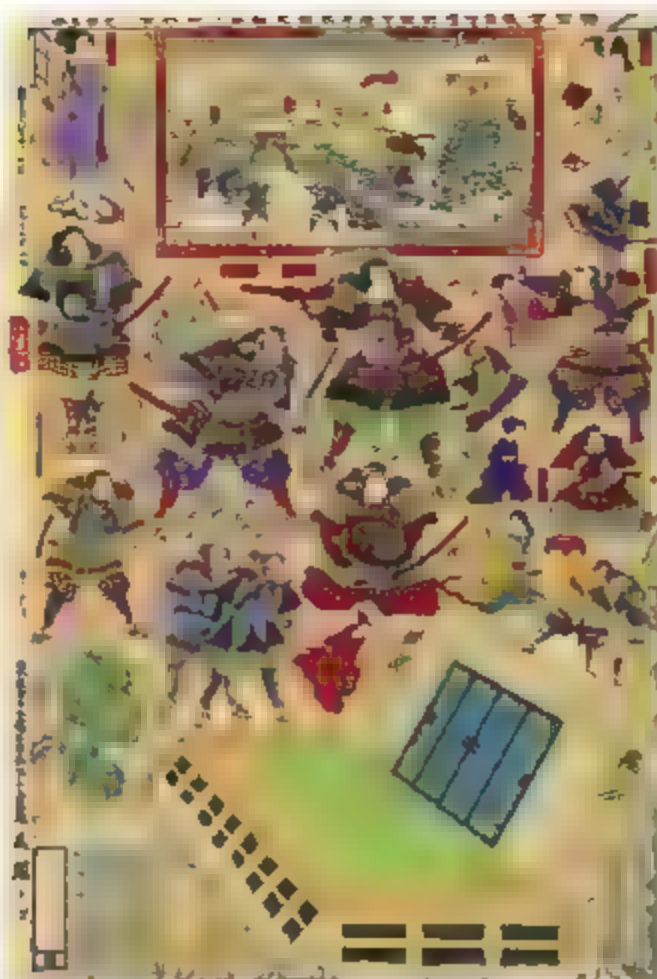
3a-d.

Artist unspecified

*Sakai Beats the Drum*

(*Sakai taiko*), 1892, four  
woodblock-printed sheets,  
each 25 x 36 cm, published  
by Ōzeki Toyo, Tokyo

Herring Collection, Tokyo



3a.



3b.



3c.



3d.



4 & 4a-c.

Artist unspecified

*Sakai Beats the Drum (Sakai taiko)*, 1892, assembled reproduction of woodblock prints, 37 × 82 × (depth) 37 cm, published by Ōzeki Toyo, Tokyo

Sakai Tadatsugu (1527–1596) is beating a drum atop a tower at Hamamatsu Castle, where Tokugawa Ieyasu (1543–1616) fled after being beaten by Takeda Shingen (1521–1573) at the Battle of Mitakagahara in 1573. Fooled into believing that the drum was part of a trap, Shingen's pursuing forces led by Yamagata Masakage (1524–1575) and Baba Nobuhara (1514/1515–1575) (foreground left and centre) decide not to attack and instead withdraw, unaware that the castle is defenceless.

42





## Osaka *kirikumi-tōrō*, Edo *kumiage-tōrō*

### Osaka

Although many Osaka *kirikumi-tōrō* are undated, most surviving examples are thought to date to the latter half of the nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries. They were probably issued in spring, possibly to allow time for their assembly before a public display in the summer. Writing under the name Kishimoto Saisei in 1940, the toy collector Kishimoto Gohei III (1897–1946) offers insight into cut-and-paste prints as a summer pastime in the Kamigata (Kyoto/Osaka region):

Whenever summer comes around, one thing I always recall is *tatebanko*, a pastime enjoyed by both young and old. Miniature kabuki stages would be constructed – illuminated with tiny lamps and placed on porches and benches – within which paper cut-outs would be set up, creating a strong sense of theatre. I grew up in Minami Horie in the West Ward of Osaka, and when evening came children would display their *tatebanko* works proudly throughout the town like the folding screens of the Gion Festival in Kyoto.<sup>18</sup>

Kishimoto further notes that people of all ages enjoyed *tatebanko* but he does not outline how they were enjoyed or who actually constructed them. Family members may have worked together to assemble the dioramas, leaving the children to set them up outside. This may have been the case in both Osaka and Tokyo. Hida Kōzō mentions that some of the assembly demands were difficult for children, therefore necessitating adult assistance.<sup>19</sup> Considering the model making skills required, it is equally possible

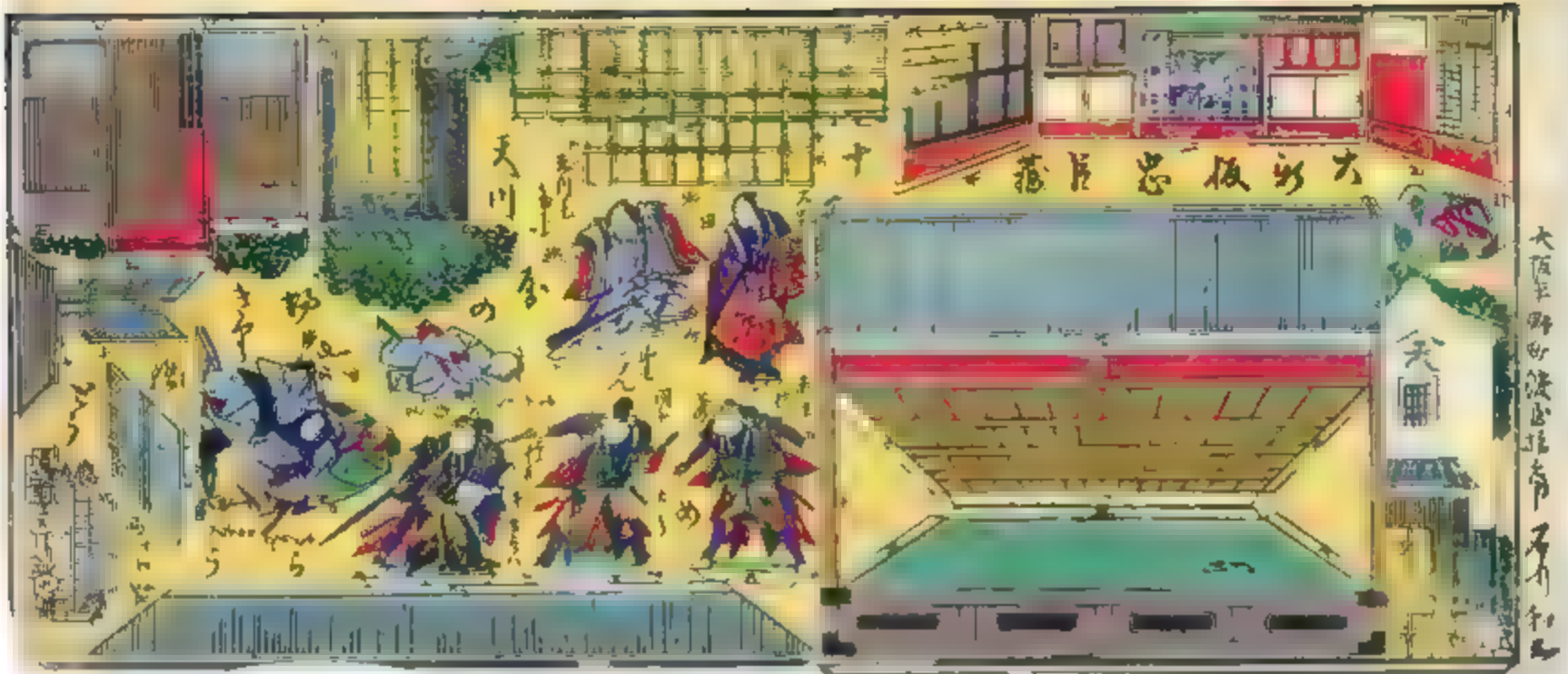


4b.



4c

that most aficionados were teenagers or adults for whom *tatebanko* was more than a passing fad. Kishimoto also observed that the displays were set up inside miniature kabuki stages. Aesthetically, such constructions would ‘complete’ a theatre display and protect it from the natural elements. It is unclear, however, how many enthusiasts had the time or money to spend on such items.



5

Artist unspecified

*The Treasury of Loyal Retainers, Act X (Chūshingura jūdanme)*,  
mid-19th century, woodblock print, 16.2 × 17.0 cm, Published  
by Ishikawaya Kazunosuke, Osaka

Photo © Hiroshi Kato



6

Artist unspecified

*The Treasury of Loyal Retainers, Act X (Chūshingura jūdanme)*,  
mid-19th century, assembled reproduction of woodblock  
prints, 11 × 30 × (depth) 16 cm, published by Ishikawaya  
Kazunosuke, Osaka

Photo © Hiroshi Kato

This diorama illustrates a scene from Act X of the play *The Copybook of the Treasury of Loyal Retainers* (*Kanadehon Chūshingura*), in which Amakawaya Gihei, the owner of a shop smuggling equipment for the avenging samurai, is tested for his loyalty. Many surviving Osaka *kirikumi-tōrō* were printed complete on a single *hasoban*-sized sheet, as seen here.



Many Osaka *kirikumi-tōrō* were printed on single *hosoban*-sized sheets; others were printed as single *ōban* sheets or in sets of *ōban* sheets. In a great number of displays, a simple sketch on one of the prints served to guide assembly. Later *ōban* sets included a more prominent and detailed colour illustration of the diorama scene, a feature adopted from Tokyo *kumiage-tōrō* (figs. 5, 6, 8 & 9).

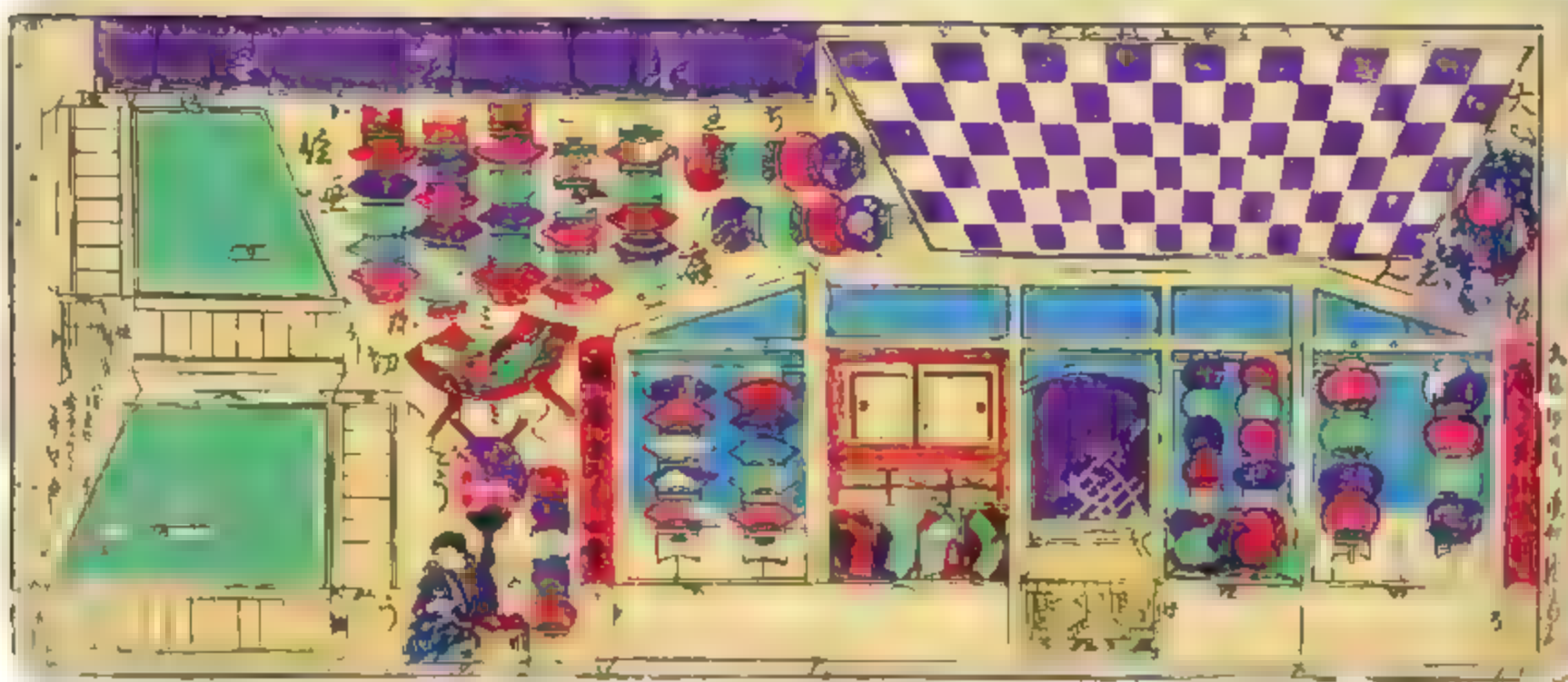
Kishimoto's employment of the term *tatebanko* supports its vernacular usage in the Kamigata region and this may have stemmed from its suitability for haiku verse. An illustration of dancers with *tōrōkazari* on their heads appears in the *Miyako sajiki*, a glossary of seasonal haiku terms of the capital (Kyoto) published in 1674 (fig. 7).<sup>20</sup> This suggests that *tōrōkazari* were a subject of verse for a considerable period. While Kishimoto described the pastime in his home district,

Minami Hone, he did not remark whether this was typical throughout Osaka. There was no mention of Tokyo or elsewhere in Japan. In his research on cut-and-paste prints in Kamigata, Hida Kōzō singles out the work of the Osaka *ukiyo-e* artists Hasegawa Sadanobu I (1809–1879) and his son Hasegawa Konobu I (1848–1940).<sup>21</sup> In addition to his woodblock prints, consisting principally of kabuki actors, landscapes and some *bijinga* ('pictures of beautiful women'), Sadanobu was also a versatile *kirikumi-tōrō* designer. He once created a fourteen-sheet diorama depicting the final act from *The Copybook of The Treasury of Loyal Retainers* (*Kanadehon Chūshingura*), a popular puppet drama and kabuki theatre play based on the political incident in 1703 that involved a group of forty-seven masterless samurai (*rōnin*) avenging the death of their lord.<sup>22</sup>



7.  
Festival decorations, from  
Santō Kyōden, *Kottōshū*  
(A Collection of  
Curiosities), vol. 1, 1813,  
woodblock-printed book,  
c. 26 × 18.6 cm, published by  
Bunkeidō, Tōto (Edo)

The image is a reproduction  
of an illustration appearing  
in the *Miyako sajiki* (1674).



8.

Hasegawa Konobu I

Fan Shop (Uchiwa ōgiten), mid-19th century, woodblock print,

37.2 × 16.7 cm, published by Ikekichi, Osaka

Uchiwa ōgiten



9.

Hasegawa Konobu I

Fan Shop (Uchiwa ōgiten), mid-19th century, assembled reproduction of woodblock prints, 10 × 20 × (depth) 50 cm, published by Ikekichi, Osaka

Konobu I's output included many small dioramas, such as this example portraying a fan shop

With the complete diorama printed on a single hosoban sheet, the size of the display was necessarily restricted

Photo: Tori no Ise

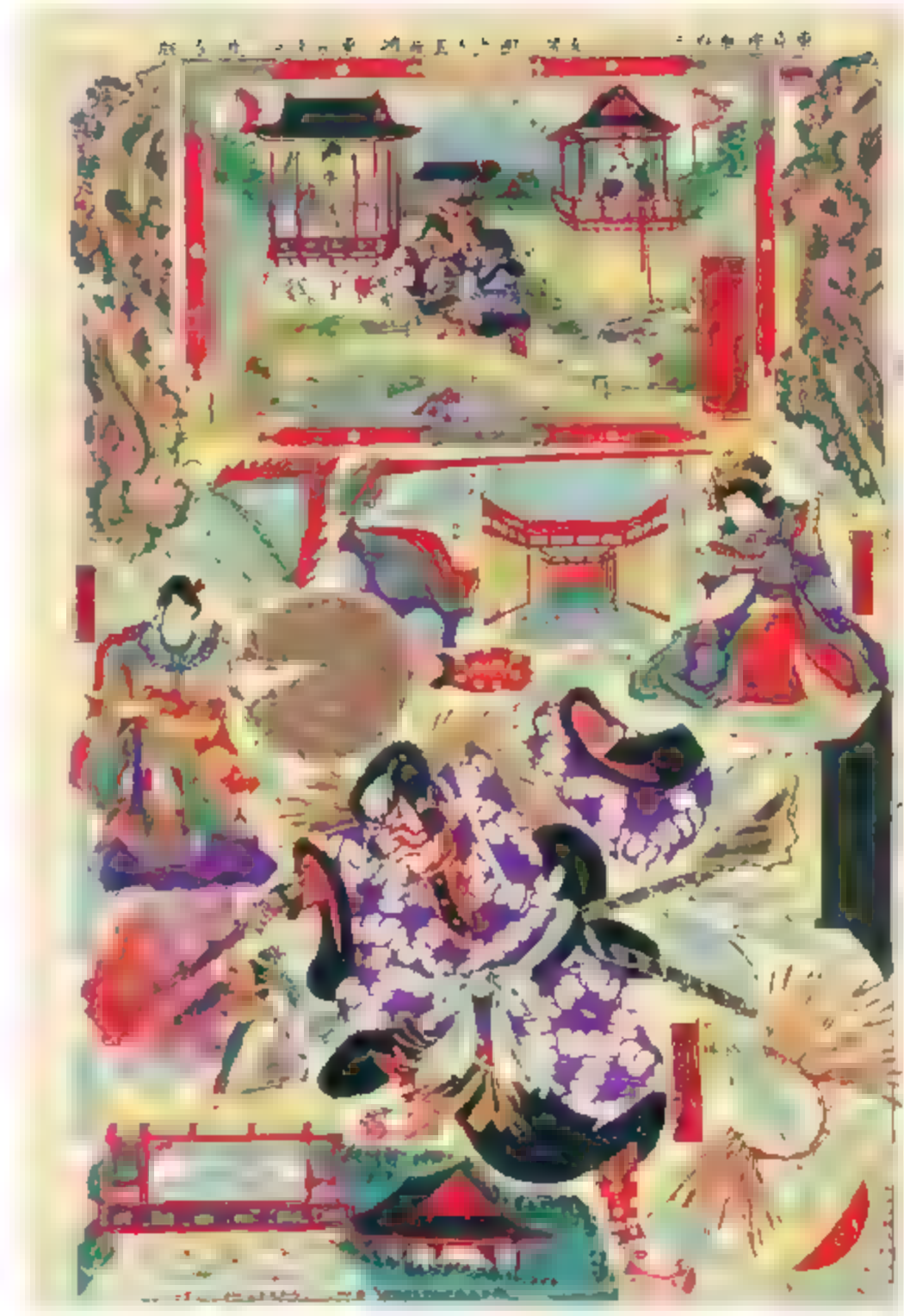


Konobu I assumed the name Sadanobu II after his father's death in 1879 and like his father he was an accomplished *ukiyo-e* artist. Hida Kōzō notes that Konobu's *kirikumi-tōrō* not only comprised models of rickshaws and small dioramas of roadside vendors but also large dioramas, some of which had impressively detailed architectural elements (figs. 6 & 9). The tight layout of the parts on Konobu's *kirikumi-tōrō* prints was particularly remarkable; little space was wasted. Sometime around 1882, the first-print runs of new *kirikumi-tōrō* in Osaka ceased.<sup>23</sup> When production resumed early in the 1890s, Sadanobu II's newly designed dioramas included contemporary military subjects.

#### Edo / Tokyo

The writer Saitō Gesshin observes in his *Bukō nenpyō* that artists taking up the craft in Edo included Katsushika Hokusai (1760–1849), Kitao Masayoshi (1764–1824), Utagawa Kuninaga (1790–1829) and Utagawa Toyohisa I (dates unknown).<sup>24</sup> Artists active during the transition from the Edo to Meiji (1868–1912) periods – and the capital's name change from Edo to Tokyo – included Utagawa Yoshifuji (1828–1887) and Bairdō Kunimasa (1848–1920) (figs. 10a–e, 11 & 11a–c).<sup>25</sup>

It is likely that early cut-and-paste prints in Edo were similar to the *kirikumi-tōrō* prints of Osaka. At some point, however, they acquired the name *kumiage-tōrō* and generally had spring publication dates. Of the surviving dioramas issued in Edo-Tokyo, the most prominent subject was the kabuki theatre. These were issued as sets of *oban*-sized prints and they evolved two elements that distinguished them from Osaka *kirikumi-tōrō*. First, labels identifying the key figures announced both the actor's name and his role in the drama.<sup>26</sup> The labels were placed next to the figures on the uncut sheets. Second, the prints were extremely colourful, with the first sheet featuring a handsomely framed



10a.

10a–e

Bairdō Kunimasa

*The Battles of Coxinga.*

*Red Flow (Kokusen'ya gassen hem nagashi), 1897,*

five woodblock-printed sheets, each: 25.3 x 38.3

cm, published by Maki

Kinnosuke, Tokyo



10b.



10c.



10d.



10e.





11 & 11A-C.

Baidō Kunimasa

*The Battles of Coxinga, Red Flow* (*Mokusen'ya gassen beni nagashi*), 1897, assembled reproduction of woodblock prints, 37 × 82 × (depth) 37 cm, published by Maki Kinnosuke, Tokyo

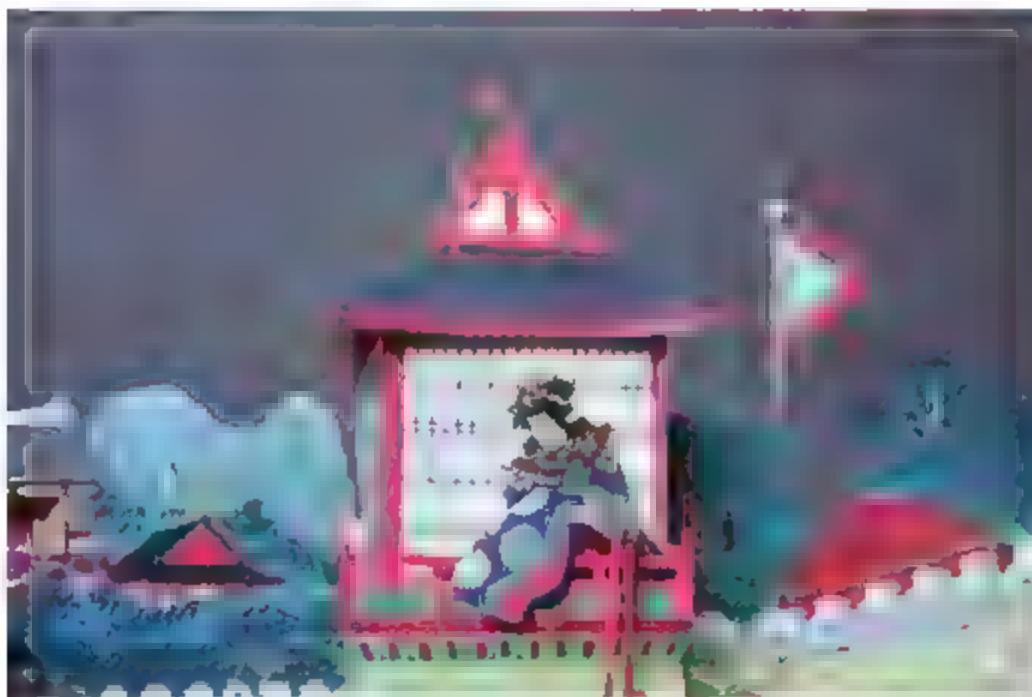
Many *kumiage-tōrō* published in Tokyo appeared to highlight the characters of kabuki plays. In this scene from *The Battles of Coxinga, Watōnai*, seeking to restore the Chinese Ming dynasty (1368–1644), stands on a bridge gazing at blood flowing past on the water below. The blood belongs to Watōnai's half-sister, Kinshijō, seen in the castle tower on the right: she sacrifices herself to convey the message that Kinshijō's husband Kankō will not join Watōnai in his fight

illustration of the completed diorama scene for assembly reference. This may have served to attract potential buyers when the sets were displayed on a print or bookseller's storefront. The remaining sheets, sometimes threaded together behind the first sheet through small holes at the top left or right of the prints, usually included supporting figures and background parts. During the Meiji period, *kumiage-tōrō* with these two elements most likely emerged to showcase popular kabuki actors in role. It is not known, however, if the kabuki-themed *kumiage-tōrō* were sold as souvenirs at theatres.<sup>27</sup> The large framed illustration could also be seen on *kumiage-tōrō* illustrating non-theatre themes such as townscapes and battle scenes. Sadanobu II adopted the two traits of Tokyo *kumiage-tōrō* when he resumed production of *kirikumi-tōrō* works in Osaka after a lengthy hiatus.<sup>28</sup>

The figures in Tokyo *kumiage-tōrō* dioramas that depicted theatrical moments tended to be larger than those in many Osaka *kirikumi-tōrō*, thus serving to highlight character portraiture. With smaller figures, the impact of dramatic character moments could sometimes be lost within the architecture or background scenery of a completed diorama. Smaller figures, however, permitted displays of sweeping battlefield scenes and large crowds. They were also eminently more suitable for non-theatrical dioramas displaying large-scale architecture, famous scenic sites and townscapes.



11a



11b



11c

## The Demise of Large Paper Dioramas

From the seventeenth to the late nineteenth century, woodblock printing monopolised the commercial mass production of text and images in Japan. With the arrival of more efficient mechanical forms of printing, the woodblock industry faced new challenges. It is conceivable that the decline of traditional *ukiyo-e* (*nishiki-e*) in the early twentieth century coincided with the decline and eventual disappearance of large dioramas as well as other woodblock-printed *kirikumi-tōrō* and *kumiage-tōrō*.<sup>29</sup>

*Kirikumi-tōrō* and *kumiage-tōrō* also faced competition from new and imported diversions during the Meiji period when Japan opened to foreign trade. The production of large dioramas diminished but they may have remained somewhat viable thanks to the popularity of kabuki and the custom of outdoor display. Nonetheless, the nature of large dioramas may have equally undermined their appeal. For serious enthusiasts, the displays may have set some benchmark of craftsmanship while the demanding construction may no longer have been attractive to others.

The final first-print run of an Osaka *kirikumi-tōrō* is believed to have been a two-sheet set from 1903 titled *The Fifth National Industrial Promotion Exhibition* (*Dai-gokai Naikoku Kangyō Hakurankai*) (figs. 12a–b, 13 & 13a–d).<sup>30</sup> The date of the final first-print run of a Tokyo *kumiage-tōrō* is not known. Hida Kozō maintains that *tatebanko* were nevertheless popular in Osaka until the end of the Meiji period due to existing stock and reprints from extant woodblock sets.<sup>31</sup> Eventually, however, children discovered more attractive forms of entertainment and adults had increasingly less time to spend on this pastime.<sup>32</sup> By the end of the Taishō period, *kirikumi-tōrō* and *kumiage-tōrō* were rarely seen, even though



it was still possible to acquire these works or reprints in the early years of the Shōwa period.<sup>33</sup> Some of the surviving examples issued late in the nineteenth or early twentieth centuries were of relatively poor print quality because of the misalignment of the woodblocks during printing. It could have been that such prints were originally not intended for sale.

12a-b.

Artist unspecified

*The Fifth National Industrial  
Promotion Exhibition (Dai-  
gokai Naikoku Kangyo  
Hakurankai)*, 1903, two  
woodblock-printed  
sheets, each 26.2 × 37.1  
cm, published by Fujikawa  
Tadashichi, Osaka

Hering Collection, Tokyo





13 & 13a-d.

Artist unspecified

*The Fifth National Industrial Promotion Exhibition (Daigokai Naikaku Kogyō Hakurankai)*, 1903, assembled reproduction of woodblock prints, 25 × 82 × (depth) 46 cm, published by Fujikawa Tadashichi, Osaka

This diorama shows the Fifth National Industrial Promotion Exhibition held in Osaka in 1903. Note that the small figures enable the creation of a crowd before the entrance of the exhibition. The use of single-point perspective visible through the arches also creates an illusory invitation for the visitor to experience the vast exhibition grounds beyond.

13a



13a





13b.



13c.



13d.

In the early twentieth century, attractive machine-printed paper amusements became increasingly available, many in the form of youth magazine supplements.<sup>34</sup> They were printed on thicker paper or card and did not require backing. These mechanically printed supplements would eventually eclipse their woodblock-printed forebears.

As noted at the beginning of this article, comparatively little has been written about dioramas apart from the reference works of Takane Kokō and Hida Kozō. Occasional exhibitions in Japan in recent years, however, indicate a growing interest in the genre. Modern copy methods have also made copies of the woodblock prints available for assembly. Without such methods, an appreciation of completed dioramas would likely require the damage and loss of countless original cut-and-paste prints. Moreover, the study of the assembled displays can

still be hampered by incomplete print sets. Fortunately, as mass-produced woodblock prints, more than one set of any given example may survive, and these, along with other yet undocumented dioramas, doubtless exist in collections, museums and other institutions in Japan and abroad. They may still be buried and forgotten as objects among family heirlooms. Their rediscovery and publication may lead to a new appreciation of these prints, the historical events and dramas they depict, as well as the ingenuity of the artists and the publishers who created them





## NOTES

- 1 Robert Louis Stevenson, *Memories and Portraits*, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1895.
- 2 INAX Gallery, *Tatebanko - Edo Naniwa toshi nitta kamigeshiki* (Construction Prints - Edo Osaka), INAX, Tokyo, 1993, 4.
- 3 Hyogo Prefectural Museum of History, *Irie korekushon 3: kumage-e* (Irie Collection 3: Construction Prints), Hyogo Prefectural Museum of History, Himeji, 2012, 3.
- 4 Ann Herring, *Omocho-e zukushu* (A Compendium of Woodblock-printed Toy Prints of Japan), 2019, 2.
- 5 INAX, *Tatebanko*, 5.
- 6 Hida Kōzō, 'Tatebanko kō' (Thoughts on Construction Prints), *Ukiyo-e geijutsu/Ukiyo-e Art* 12 (1966): 11–31.
- 7 Takane Kōkō, *Kumage-tōrō kō* (Thoughts on Construction Prints), Private publication, Tokyo, 1971.
- 8 Examples of cut-and-paste prints are in the Irie Collection at the Hyōgo Prefectural Museum of History in Himeji. The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, for example, has cut-and-paste prints by Katsushika Hokusai, <https://collections.mfa.org/objects/212320>, <https://collections.mfa.org/objects/212825>, <https://collections.mfa.org/objects/212826>, accessed 28 August 2020.
- 9 Hida, 'Tatebanko kō', 11.
- 10 Hida, 'Tatebanko kō', 11.
- 11 Takane, *Kumage-tōrō kō*, 1.
- 12 Hida, 'Tatebanko kō', 12.
- 13 Hida, 'Tatebanko kō', 12.
- 14 Hida, 'Tatebanko kō', 14.
- 15 Hida, 'Tatebanko kō', 14.
- 16 Tobacco & Salt Museum, *Ukiyo-e hanazakari* (The Blossoming of Ukiyo-e), Tobacco & Salt Museum, Tokyo, 2005, 7.
- 17 Takane, *Kumage-tōrō kō*, 5–6.
- 18 Kishimoto Saisei, 'Kamigata gangu no omoide' (Recollections of Kamigata Amusements), 1940, quoted in Hida, 'Tatebanko kō', 29.
- 19 Hida, 'Tatebanko kō', 29.
- 20 Hida, 'Tatebanko kō', 12.
- 21 Hida, 'Tatebanko kō', 17.
- 22 Hida, 'Tatebanko kō', 20–23.
- 23 Hida, 'Tatebanko kō', 27.
- 24 INAX, *Tatebanko*, 4.
- 25 On Yoshifuji (1828–1887), see Takane, *Kumage-tōrō kō*, 12. On Kunimasa, see Tamagawa University Education Museum, *Suzuki korekushon: omocho-e no seikai* (The Suzuki Collection: World of Toy Prints), Tamagawa University Education Museum, Tokyo, 2010, 22.
- 26 Hida, 'Tatebanko kō', 27.
- 27 Tamagawa University Education Museum, *Suzuki korekushon*, 18.
- 28 Hida, 'Tatebanko kō', 27.
- 29 Hyōgo Prefectural Museum of History, *Irie korekushon* 3, 4.
- 30 Hida, 'Tatebanko kō', 28.
- 31 Hida, 'Tatebanko kō', 29.
- 32 See Hida, 'Tatebanko kō', 30, and Hyōgo Prefectural Museum of History, *Irie korekushon* 3, 4.
- 33 Tamagawa University Education Museum, *Suzuki korekushon*, 18.
- 34 Hone Akiko and Nakamura Keiko, *Shonen shōjo furoku korekushon* (Youth Magazine Supplement Collection), Yayoi Museum and Amuse Books, Tokyo, 1996, 16.

# Celebrating the Good Life of the People of Japan:

## *Yamaguchi Soken's Yamato jinbutsu gafu*

Ellis Tinios

In *Yamato jinbutsu gafu* (An Album of Japanese Genre Scenes) the Kyoto artist Yamaguchi Soken (1759–1818) presents a compelling vision of the good life enjoyed by the people of Japan under the benevolent rule of the Tokugawa shoguns. Hishiya Magobei, one of Kyoto's leading publishers, issued the book in 1799 in three large-format volumes, which are printed in line only and contain a total of fifty double-page and five single-page illustrations.'





The first character of the title unequivocally signals that the content of the book is Japanese. *Yamato* was a venerable name that conjured up the antiquity and uniqueness of Japan and its people.<sup>3</sup> *Gafu* is most often associated with copybooks devoted to mastering the painting of canonic Chinese subjects in a Chinese manner. This Chinese term was not one usually encountered in the title of a book devoted to the people of Japan.<sup>3</sup> *Jinbutsu* (human figures), the middle component of the title, denotes one of the three genres cultivated by Chinese *bunjin* (literati) painters.<sup>4</sup> In the *jinbutsu* sections of instruction manuals – whether by Chinese or Japanese artists – the figures are invariably in Ming dynasty (1368–1644) dress and restricted to long-gowned scholars with their boy attendants, and to contented peasants and

fishermen. Women are rarely represented and when they are it is only in the company of the latter. The primary purpose of these *jinbutsu* sections was to provide a rich store of staffage for incorporation into idealised landscapes. In stark contrast, Soken shows men, women and children from all stations of society in specific settings and engaged in familiar activities. Not only is his subject life in Japan, it is contemporary life. Soken does not portray an idealised past; he is concerned with the people of Yamato in the here and now. However, his Yamato is limited to Kyoto and its environs. While he illustrates travellers coming to and going from the capital, his vision extends no further than the countryside surrounding the imperial city. In Soken's hands, *jinbutsu* assumes a meaning close to 'genre' as used by students of European art when referring to

1  
Yamaguchi Soken  
'Gion pictures', from *Yamato  
jinbutsu gafu*, 1799, volume 1

This is the second in a  
sequence of six illustrations



2

Yamaguchi Soken

'Bathhouse', from *Yamato  
jinbutsu gafu*, 1799, volume 2

This is the first in  
a sequence of two  
illustrations.



3

Yamaguchi Soken

'Barber Shop', from  
*Yamato jinbutsu gafu*, 1799,  
volume 3





4.

Yamaguchi Soken

'Night Stalls', from *Yamato*

*jimbutsu gafu*, 1799.

volume 2



5.

Yamaguchi Soken

'Viewing Cherry

Blossoms', from *Yamato*

*jimbutsu gafu*, 1799.

volume 3



paintings and prints that depict the everyday life of ordinary people both at work and at play. The translation of *Yamato jinbutsu gafu* may thus be expanded to read: 'An Album Presenting the Daily Life of the People of Our Country'. It was the first of a number of such 'genre books' that were published – primarily in the Kyoto-Osaka (Kamigata) region – in the opening decades of the nineteenth century. They are among the most endearing of all the books created by Maruyama-Shijō artists.<sup>5</sup>

The book commences with a bold four-character inscription 'playful brush-tip' (*gōtan yūgi*) provided by the distinguished Confucian scholar and calligrapher Minagawa Ki'en (1734–1807). Ki'en elliptically praises Soken's skill with the brush; he extols the spontaneity and fluidity of his line. The inscription is followed by a preface by the author, poet and

indefatigable editor, Akisato Ritō (fl. 1780–1820).<sup>6</sup> The latter stresses that *Yamato jinbutsu gafu* is about 'our country' (*waga kuni*) and compliments Soken for capturing the timeless spirit of the Japanese people, unchanged since the age of the gods. Ritō notes that the artist accomplishes in painting what his grandfather, the poet Yamaguchi Rajin (1699–1752), had achieved through his verse. The presence of *Yamato* in the title, the use of the *waga kuni* in the preface and the contents suggest the 'nativist' intent for the book.<sup>7</sup>

Soken's illustrations move loosely through the year, beginning with early spring and New Year observances and taking in key annual events such as the Gion Festival with its procession of great carts (fig. 1). Along with iconic Kyoto moments, Soken explores mundane settings such as a neighbourhood

6. Yamaguchi Soken  
'In a Brothel', from *Yamato jinbutsu gafu*, 1799, volume 3

The women and girls of a large establishment prepare themselves to entertain their clients. The first in a sequence of two illustrations



7.  
Yamaguchi Soken  
'Third Avenue (Sanjo) in  
Higashiyama', from *Tōkaidō  
meisho zue*, 1797, volume 1

Travellers setting off on  
the Tōkaidō highway take  
leave of friends while other  
travellers reach the end of  
their journey; teahouses  
offer refreshment

bathhouse (fig. 2), a puppet theatre, a barber  
shop (fig. 3), a night market, an alley of  
prostitutes' stalls (fig. 4), a wayside teahouse.  
He notices travellers adjusting their footgear,  
tea-ceremony enthusiasts keenly observing  
the tea master's preparations, a plasterer  
working from a scaffold, women from the  
outlying village of Ōhara coming to the city  
with bundles of kindling balanced on their  
heads. Embedded within the flow of individual  
images are occasional sequences ranging  
from two to six related double-page spreads.  
These linked images are not contiguous in the  
manner of a handscroll; each turn of the page  
reveals a different aspect of the activity being  
observed. Thus the theatre sequence begins  
with a puppet 'on stage' being manipulated by  
its three hooded operators, then jumps to the  
narrator and his shamisen accompanist, and

concludes with a view along a corridor from  
which theatre staff deliver food to members of  
the audience. Soken's images are throughout  
characterised by novel compositions, sureness  
of line, liveliness, humanity and telling  
incidental detail

*Yamato jinbutsu gafu* offers a multi-  
faceted picture of a people living in peace  
and harmony, in a world without violence,  
suffering or pain. Soken encompasses all the  
grades and categories of people one might  
expect to encounter in Kyoto in the closing  
years of the eighteenth century, from court  
nobles to streetwalkers. Each individual plays  
his or her appointed role in an orderly manner.  
The only disorder recorded is the good-  
natured drunkenness of friends returning from  
viewing cherry blossoms (fig. 5). Life goes  
on harmoniously in the blessed land that is



Japan. The ordinary, the everyday, are offered to us as worthy of contemplation (fig. 6). What we find in this book – and the other *jimbutsu gafu* that followed in its wake – is akin to the joy that designers of Kamigata *surimono* and writers of *haibun* found in contemplating the small details of daily life. Soken's message is clear: This is how life should be lived; this is how we Japanese lead our lives.<sup>8</sup>

*Yamato jimbutsu gafu* emerged from the milieu that saw the publication of the first group of the monumental, multi-volume *meisho zue* (illustrated sights).<sup>9</sup> *Meisho zue* resemble *jimbutsu gafu* in that they too celebrate the joys of a nation at peace. The two genres differ in that *jimbutsu gafu* consist entirely of images and deal for the most part with city life. Texts in them are limited to opening inscriptions, prefaces, and possibly a table of contents. In contrast, pages of dense text predominate in *meisho zue* and individual titles are devoted to a city, a province or to a major route crossing Japan. Akisato Ritō, who wrote a preface for *Yamato jimbutsu gafu*,

edited ten of the first eleven *meisho zue*, which covered Kyoto, the provinces surrounding it and the Tōkaidō highway that linked the city to Edo. When editing *Tōkaidō meisho zue* (1797), Ritō invited Soken to provide two illustrations for the first volume of that book. Many more figures appear in the bustling street scenes Soken produced for *Tōkaidō meisho zue* than in any of his illustrations for *Yamato jimbutsu gafu*; however, they are imbued with the same spirit (fig. 7). Indeed, the artist reimagined some smaller groupings in the former into the more tightly focused compositions characteristic of the latter. Perhaps Soken's contributions to *Tōkaidō meisho zue* inspired him to create *Yamato jimbutsu gafu*.

I do not want to burden these books with too heavy a meaning but I cannot help wondering if we should not consider *Yamato jimbutsu gafu* and the 'genre books' that followed it as manifestations of an art of 'consolation that "excises the pain" of contemporary reality' that Mary Elisabeth Berry identified in the sixteenth-century



8.  
Yamaguchi Soken  
'Enjoying the Evening Cool',  
from *Yamato jimbutsu gafu*,  
1799, volume 2

In the hottest weeks  
of the summer, Kyoto  
restaurateurs were  
permitted to erect platforms  
on the bed of the Kama River  
so that their clients could  
dine *afresco*.



folding screens depicting Kyoto.<sup>50</sup> Evident in these books are the three techniques of consolation that Berry finds in the screens: emphasis on place [here again Kyoto], a focus on the cyclical time of the seasons and the ritual calendar, and a preoccupation with people and their everyday customs.<sup>51</sup> In this period, some Japanese sought momentary escape from the constraints imposed on them by the Tokugawa social order by pursuing, as best they could, the *bunjin* ideal of scholarly reclusion and self-cultivation imported from China. Others – perhaps even many erstwhile *bunjin* – may well have sought solace in contemplating the idyllic vision of their own society presented so persuasively in these books (fig. 8).

## NOTES

I would like to thank Ishigami Aki, Matsuba Ryōko, Christian Dunkel and Alessandro Bianchi for their assistance at various points in the preparation of this piece.

1 Each ‘large-book’ (*ōbon*) volume measures 26 × 18.6 cm. This was the largest book size commonly employed by commercial publishers in the Edo period (1603–1868). In 1804, five years after the release of *Yamato jinbutsu gafu*, Hishiya Magobei commissioned Soken to produce *Yamato jinbutsu gafu kōhen* (An Album of Japanese Genre Scenes, Part Two), also in three *ōbon* volumes. I am not considering the latter in this note. *Yamato jinbutsu gafu* may be viewed in its entirety at the Ritsumeikan University Art Research Center’s Early Japanese Book Portal Database, <https://www.dh-jac.net/db1/books/Eb10559/default/> (click on the thumbnail), accessed 6 October 2020. In this copy the three volumes are bound together in one volume.

2 *Yamato* is written in the title with a single character 倭, not the more common two-character rendering of the word 大和.

3 Notable exceptions are *Itcho gafu* (1770) and *Kyūro gafu* (1797/1799), but neither of those books are devoted exclusively to the depiction of daily life in Japan.

4 The three are landscapes (*sansui*), flowers-and-birds (*kocho*) and human figures (*jinbutsu*).

5 For other ‘genre books’ (*jinbutsu gafu*) by Maruyama Shijō artists, see Nishimura Nantei, *Nantei gafu* (1803); Kawamura Kihō, *Kafuku ninpitsu* (1808); Kawamura Bunpo and Watanabe Nangaku, *Kaido kyōka awase* (1811); Nishimura Nantei, *Nantei gafu, kōhen* (1826), and Onishi Chinnen, *Azuma no tebuti* (1829). All focus on Kyoto except for the Chinnen volume, which takes life in Edo as its subject. *Jinbutsu gafu* should be distinguished from the contemporaneous *ehon* (‘picture-books’) produced by *ukiyo-e* artists. *Ukiyo-e ehon* focus on actors, prostitutes and entertainers and the narrow quasi-fantasy world those celebrities inhabited. I do not regard the latter as *jinbutsu gafu*. *Jinbutsu gafu* are distinguished by the representation of a broad panorama of life and society.

6 In the very earliest printings of *Yamato jinbutsu gafu*, this preface is preceded by an additional two-page preface written by Go Shūn (Matsumura Gekkei, 1752–1811), co-founder of the Maruyama-Shijō school and Soken’s teacher.

7 ‘Native Studies’ (*kokugaku*). ‘In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries . . . [*kokugaku*] came to refer more narrowly to the effort to discern a native Way distinct from Buddhism and Confucianism within Japan’s most ancient writings, and to the attendant effort to resurrect that Way in the present’ Gideon Fujiwara and Peter Nosco, ‘The Kokugaku (Native Studies) School’, *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2018), ed. Edward N. Zalta, <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2018/entries/kokugaku-school/>, accessed 1 July 2020.

8 There is one significant exception to this approach in the corpus of *jinbutsu gafu*: Kawamura Kihō’s *Kafuku ninpitsu*. The misfortunes as well as the joys of life are unflinchingly recorded in that remarkable book.

9 The first of these, *Miyako mesho zue*, was devoted to Kyoto and published in six ‘large-book’ volumes in 1780. Thirty-five more *mesho zue* – all in multiple ‘large-book’ volumes – appeared over the following eighty years.

10 Mary Elisabeth Berry, *The Culture of Civil War in Kyoto*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1997, 285–302.

# The Osaka Actor Ichikawa Gyokuen: A Small-Time Player Has His Moment in the Spotlight

John Fiorillo

Collectors of *ukiyo-e* will know the thrill of acquiring an unrecorded print – the more obscure the better. I was recently delighted to find a rare Osaka woodblock print (fig. 1) designed by Hasegawa Munehiro (fl. 1848–1863). The portrait seems to be the only known likeness of an actor named Ichikawa Gyokuen,<sup>1</sup> who in the 1850s was linked with an amateur sermonising entertainment troupe in Osaka. Records also show that Gyokuen, fresh off a triumphant appearance in the role of Watōnai in a children’s theatre production, was handed a one-time opportunity to score big at a top-ranked Osaka kabuki theatre, the Kado, in the eleventh lunar month of 1855.

1. (opposite page)  
Hasegawa Munehiro  
Ichikawa Gyokuen as Watōnai  
in a performance at the Kado  
Theatre, 11/1855,  
small-chūban woodblock  
print, 23.7 × 17.0 cm,  
no publisher’s seal

A small-chūban woodblock print, 23.7 × 17.0 cm, no publisher’s seal



角三郎  
おひさ  
和歌内  
市川玉楼  
お節子

宗賢







3  
Makieshi Genzaburo  
'Doorstep Sermonisers'  
(*Kado sekkyō*), from the  
*Jinrin kinmō zui*, 1690,  
woodblock-printed book,  
vol. 7, 23.0 × 16.0 cm,  
published by Heirakuji  
(Murakami Kanbei), Kyoto,  
Murakami Seizaburō,  
Osaka, Murakami Gorobei,  
Edo

about the supernatural. Troubling to the authorities, numerous *sekkyō* were not, strictly speaking, religious missionaries fundraising for temples and shrines; rather, they were beggars roaming the streets for less altruistic purposes. A report to the Osaka city magistrate in 1795, for instance, complained that some sermonisers previously authorised by shrines had severed their ties with legitimate *sekkyō* groups and became unlicensed performing beggars.<sup>4</sup>

So-called 'doorstep [gate] sermonisers' (*kado sekkyō* 門説経) preached and entertained at the entrances of private residences. They are mentioned in the 1690 *Jinrin kinmō zui* (Pictorial Encyclopedia of Humanity) by the lacquer artist and illustrator Makieshi Genzaburō (fl. 1690–1706), who appears to have been a pupil of the Kyoto book illustrator Yoshida Hanbei (fl. 1664–1692).<sup>5</sup> This illustrated inventory contains 496 commentaries on craftsmen, tradesmen, labourers, street vendors, entertainers, musicians, low-ranking prostitutes and other occupations of the day. The page shown here (fig. 3) is accompanied by a disdainful text

(not the only one in the compendium) stating that *kado sekkyō* were beggars with a *kokyū*, a three-stringed instrument played with a bow, or a 'scraper' (*sasara*), a percussive, rhythmic instrument composed of a split-bamboo 'whisk' and a notched stick that was scraped or banged together. The writer concluded that these two street musicians must have been the lowliest of the *sekkyō*. In figure 3, the *kokyū* fiddler is on the right and the *sasara* percussionist on the left. They flank a *sekkyō* with a *shamisen*, a three-stringed instrument plucked with a large animal-horn plectrum. A century and a half later, in the 1850s, Kitagawa Morisada (1810–?) described the *sekkyō* such as the central figure illustrated here as 'standing at doorways, playing the *shamisen* and begging for coins'.<sup>6</sup>

The personal story of the actor Ichikawa Gyokuen involves one of the legitimate Edo-period *sekkyō* organisations, the Sermonisers Sango Troupe (*Sekkyōsha Sangoza*). The Sangoza operated under the auspices of the Seki Semimaru Shrine, which was controlled by the Kinshō Temple (*Kinshōji*), an affiliate of the Buddhist Tendai Mii Temple (*Miidera*).

The Osaka branch of the Sangoza can be traced back to a famous sermoniser named Higurashi Hachidayū active in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. The first official connection in Osaka between sermonisers and shrine/street entertainment is thought to have originated in 1712 when the city authorities granted performance rights to Hachidayū. About a century later, in 1819, the *sekkyō* Shimizu Kindayū received permission to entertain on the grounds of Osaka's temples and shrines. From that year forward, the Sangoza also came to signify Osaka's shrine-land kabuki stagings, many of which came under their purview.<sup>7</sup>

In 1837, the Sangoza attempted to claim that all shrine-land performances in Osaka fell under its jurisdiction. This led to a conflict with *jōruri* chanters (*gidayū*) and *shamisen* players in an Osaka bunraku group at the Inari Shrine Puppet Theatre (Inarisha Bunrakuza), the home of the troupe founded by Uemura Bunrakuken (1751–1810), whose name became synonymous with puppet theatre in general. The Sangoza lost its claim before the Osaka city magistrate, who ruled that what the Sangoza's street-performing *sekkyō* beggar's group did was different from the chanted *jōruri* in bunraku puppet theatre. Nevertheless, the Seki Semimaru Shrine and the Sangoza continued to extend their control over theatrical productions at shrines. By the 1850s, they were signing up non-*sekkyō* entertainers, including kabuki actors, and licensing them for entertainment venues operating within Osaka's shrine and temple grounds (*shanai shibai*). As a result, the owners of performance rights for kabuki plays staged in those precincts were required to acknowledge the authority of the Sangoza. Kabuki actors had to pay the Seki Semimaru Shrine a certification or licence fee (*menjōryō*) of one silver *monme* coin as well as additional yearly votive fees.

Active in the 1850s, Gyokuen was an obscure, low-ranking actor associated with *shanai shibai* and children's kabuki theatre (*kodomo shibai*). The latter were small theatres at which the youngest actors were trained and typically made their stage debuts. These venues were also populated by adult actors who for various reasons were not qualified for the larger kabuki halls. *Kodomo shibai* plays were usually booked into the Inari Shrine or the Oike Shrine. When a particular staging in a *kodomo shibai* proved to be a huge hit, however, theatre managers would sometimes move the production into a temporarily rented top-tier 'big theatre' (*ōshibai*) on a street along the south side of the Dōtonbori (Dōton Canal), which constituted Osaka's main 'theatre district'.<sup>8</sup>

Sometime in 1855 Gyokuen scored a triumph in a *kodomo shibai* production of *The Battles of Kokusen'ya* (*Kokusen'ya kassen*). Written by Chikamatsu Monzaemon (1653–1725) as a puppet drama, it premiered in 1715 at the Takemoto Theatre in Osaka. *Kokusen'ya* remains unsurpassed as the most successful play in the history of bunraku.<sup>9</sup> Kabuki produced many adaptations, starting in 1716 at the Miyako Mandayū Theatre in Kyoto, a kabuki hall that had earlier employed Chikamatsu for ten years from 1693 to 1702.<sup>10</sup> According to one modern kabuki reference, the 1855 *kodomo shibai* production was moved in the eleventh lunar month to the prestigious Kado Theatre in Dōtonbori.<sup>11</sup> Gyokuen headlined in the lead role of Watōnai – a fisherman by trade who is actually the son of a former Ming minister exiled to Japan. Watōnai, trained in military strategy, sails to China with his father to defeat the Tartars and restore the Ming dynasty (1368–1644).

Kabuki records do not declare how successful the upscaled production at the Kado was, but Gyokuen must have caught the attention of a sponsor (fan club, kabuki patron, theatre manager or publisher),



otherwise Hasegawa Munehiro's print would not have been issued (see fig. 1). The portrait is a small-*chūban* deluxe print with extensive application of gold-colour (copper-rich) brass pigment. Gyokuen's costume incorporates a conventionalised fixed 'form' (*kata*) for actors in the role of *Watōnai*: the distinctive 'anchor-rope' (*ikarizuna*) headband, a motif repeated in this instance crisscrossing Gyokuen's red outer robe. He is enclosed within a frame representing 'triple rice-measuring boxes' (*mimasu*), the crest of the Ichikawa acting lineage. As was common practice in Osaka actor-print bust portraits at this time, Gyokuen's figure fills the pictorial space, and although the costume might have been voluminous, he seems to be a rather heavy-set actor.

What Gyokuen might have achieved after his appearance at the Kado is mostly clouded in mystery. We do know that by the fifth month of 1858, he was listed as one of the non-*sekkyō* performers who had joined the Sangoza and was granted a licence under the auspices of the Seki Semimaru Shrine.<sup>13</sup> This authorised Gyokuen to act in kabuki plays staged at the humble Goryō Shrine in Osaka, surely a descent from the grand Kado Theatre.<sup>14</sup> The Goryō Shrine, which can trace its origins back to the ninth century, was located well north (about twenty-five blocks) of Dōtonbori. The Osaka artist Enjaku (fl. 1856–1866), who was the nonpareil chronicler of Osaka's shrine-theatre kabuki, designed merely four prints for the Goryō Shrine within a very brief span of time from the first to the fifth lunar months of 1862. Far more important were two other shrine theatres for which Enjaku produced actor portraits: the Inari Shrine (twenty-eight prints from 1858 to 1861) and the Tenma Tenjin Shrine (thirty-eight prints from 1858 to 1865).<sup>15</sup> Given its low ranking in the kabuki world, the Goryō Shrine Theatre also kept busy hosting various amateur performances, including variety hall entertainments, many being

one-person enterprises whose managers and performers typically had unrelated daytime occupations.<sup>16</sup> These venues were called *kōshakuba* ('storytelling halls') in Osaka and *yoseba* ('assembling halls') in Edo. Among other things, these entertainment spaces presented actor mimicry with amateurs reciting kabuki soliloquies or dialogues using the technique of 'voice colouring' (*kowairo*) to alter their speech and imitate famous professional actors.

So far, no textual evidence has turned up explaining why, after reaching the threshold of stardom with the staging at the Kado, Ichikawa Gyokuen descended back to the theatrical hinterland. Presumably, he lacked the charisma or the right combination of skills needed to win over audiences at the 'big theatres' or perhaps some other factor impeded his further rise in the hierarchical kabuki world. Nevertheless, the unexpected discovery of a deluxe-edition woodblock print for a top-tier staging of a *kodomo shibai* production is certainly noteworthy, made more intriguing by Gyokuen reverting to lowly status as a Sangoza non-*sekkyō* actor at the Goryō Shrine Theatre.



## NOTES

1 Ichikawa Gyokuen is not listed, for example, in Nojima Jusaburō, *Kabuki jinnai jiten* (Biographical Dictionary of Kabuki Performers), Nichigai Associates, Tokyo, 1988.

2 Gerald Groemer, *Street Performers and Society in Urban Japan, 1600–1900: The Beggar's Gift*, Routledge, London, 2016, 121. The author does not identify the source aside from calling it an 'enumeration'. Readers who are familiar with the history of kabuki will recall the disparaging term 'riverbed beggars' (*kawarakajiki*), more or less equivalent to *kawaromono*, applied to actors and street entertainers, including these performing beggars. This view persisted somewhat absurdly and anachronistically in regard to kabuki actors, even after the mid-seventeenth century when kabuki had already evolved from amateurish skits

into a thriving and sophisticated art form and when its stage idols enjoyed the privileges of wealth and popular high regard.

3 This list is modified from Groemer, *Street Performers*, 121, see also 26, 51–52, 151–52, 235 and 244–45. Ebisu dances were at the core of religious puppetry in Japan. Also see Jane M. Law *Puppets of Nostalgia: The Life, Death and Rebirth of the Japanese Awaji Ningyo Tradition*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1997, 94–100.

4 Yutsuk Kanda, 'The Traditional City of Osaka and Performers', *City, Culture and Society* 3, issue 1 (March 2012): 53. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S1877916612000203>, accessed 1 August 2020.

5 Among his more than one hundred illustrated books, Hanbei supplied the images for at least twelve of the novels and story collections by Ihara Saikaku (1642–1693), the last around 1689. After Hanbei's death or retirement, Makieshi Genzaburō seems to have taken over illustrating Saikaku's works starting around 1692, including five posthumous publications from 1693 to 1699. The seven volumes comprising *Jinrin kinmō zui* are in the National Diet Library, <https://dl.ndl.go.jp/info:ndl/pip/2609185?tocOpened=1>, accessed 19 August 2020.

6 Groemer, *Street Performers*, 2. This quote comes from *Morisada mankō* (Morisada's Rambling Writings), an illustrated compilation from the mid-nineteenth century.

7 Kanda, 'The Traditional City', 52.

8 Some of the information about the *kodomo shibai* was communicated to me on 28 June 2020 by Peter Ujlak following his discussion with the Kamigata-print scholar Professor Kitagawa Hiroko from Konan Women's University, Kobe.

9 The puppet play is translated in Donald Keene, *Major Plays of Chikamatsu*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1961, 195–269.

10 A brief synopsis of the kabuki adaptation is given in Aubrey and Giovanna Halford, *The Kabuki Handbook*,

Tuttle, Rutland, New York, 1956, 203–5, Samuel L. Leiter, *New Kabuki Encyclopedia*, Greenwood Press, Westport, 1997, 347–49; and Arendie and Henk Herwig, *Heroes of the Kabuki Stage: An Introduction to Kabuki with Retellings of Famous Plays Illustrated by Woodblock Prints*, Hotei Publishing, Amsterdam, 2004, 109–12.

11 The 11/1855 performance, with a reference to the *kodomo shibai*, is cited in Ihara Toshiro, *Kabuki nenpyō* (Chronology of Kabuki), Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, vol. 7, 1962, 27, where Gyokuen is further credited with playing the minor role of Kansuke. The performance is also listed in Matsudaira Susumu, *Hankyū Gakuen Ikeda Bunko shozō, shibai banzuke mokuroku* (Ikeda Bunko Collection in the Hankyū Gakuen: Catalogue of Theatre Programmes), Ikeda Bunko, Osaka, vol. 1, 1981, 51, no. 1–581.

12 Kanda, 'The Traditional City', 54.

13 In addition to Ichikawa Gyokuen, other scarcely (if ever) encountered actors who had licences or certifications from the Seki Semimaru Shrine to perform at the Goryō Shrine were Arashi Eijirō, Ichikawa Kōzaburō, Ichikawa Yoneji, Mimasu Yoshisaburō, Nakamura Matsunosuke, Nakamura Tominojō and the leader of the actor's group, Onoe Chōroku.

14 John Fiorillo and Hendrick Luhl, 'Enjaku: An Osaka Master of the Deluxe Print during the Transition to the Final Period,' special issue, *Andon* (2006). Some of the kabuki actors performing at the Tenma Tenjin Shrine who were licensed in 5/1858 by the Seki Semimaru Shrine and the Sangoza included, aside from a few unknowns, several well-documented performers such as Ichikawa Koyone II, Ichikawa Yonezō III, Kanō Fukusuke I, Onoe Taizō I and Segawa Michinosuke III. A third temple, the Wakoji in Osaka, had yet another line-up of obscure actors (Kanda, 'The Traditional City', 54). The registers of actors were thus unique to each Osaka shrine.

15 Hugh de Ferranti and Alison Tokita, eds., *Musx, Modernity and Locality in Prewar Japan: Osaka and Beyond*, Routledge, London, New York, 2013, 63–64.

# Hayami Sōtatsu, Hayami-ryū and the Subtle Power of Tea

Beatrice B. Shoemaker

Founded by Hayami Sōtatsu (1739–1809) in the late eighteenth century, the Hayami school (Hayami-ryū) of tea served an imperial elite and witnessed the incipient cultural winds of change that would eventually lead to imperial restoration. On 17 March 2019, the thirty-eight-year-old Hayami Michihiro walked up to the altar at the seventeenth-century Main Hall (Sōnden) of the imperial temple, Shōgoin, in Kyoto during a formal transmission ceremony to accept the mantle of eighth emoto of the Hayami-ryū and the tea name (go-me) Soen Sosho (figs. 1 & 2).





The 2019 event included grandees of the Tokyo-based Urasenke and Omotesenke schools, Tendai and Honzan Shugendō abbots as well as some 400 devoted tea practitioners (*chajin*) Miyagi Ta.gaku, the current abbot of Shōgoin, presided over proceedings that were witnessed by the former abbot seated under a canopy housing a golden two-tiered pagoda (fig. 3). Following Soen Soshō, with nose and mouth covered to prevent defilement, acolytes brought in two late eighteenth-century golden-hued Raku tea bowls set on small 'hanging stands' (*kokakedai*), known as *kenchodai* ('tea offering to the gods' [*kencha*] stands [*dai*]), and placed them on the altar.<sup>2</sup> Having made his vows before the late seventeenth-century statues of En no Gyōja, Fudō Myōō and Aizen Myōō, presiding divinities of the Shugendō and Tendai traditions, Sōen Sōshō sprinkled powdered tea into a lacquer offering box (*jūbako*) (fig.

4). Sutras, blessings, chants and a reading of the history of Hayami-ryū concluded the rite (fig. 5). This *kencha* ceremony consecrated the latest in an unbroken line of tea masters descended from Hayami Sotatsu. Sotatsu revived the courtly forms of tea of the fifteenth-century Ashikaga shogunate to serve an imperial clientele and the school prides itself on being the only lineage not to have modified its practice since inception. Witness to a time of deep intellectual ferment, Sotatsu defined the tea ceremony, or *chanoyū*, as 'a ceremony that connects people through tea and deepens their ties'.<sup>3</sup> His story is one of tea as an agent of covert dissent

1. Shōgoin, courtyard,  
Main and Fudō Halls,  
17 march 2019

Photo by the author  
Permission of Shōgoin

## Hayami Sôtatsu: Imperial Ties with Shōgoin

Established in around 1090, the Shōgoin ('Temple Protector of the Emperor') is the main temple of the Tendai Buddhist tradition and the headquarters of Honzan Shugendō, an ascetic Buddhist practice. The current buildings date from 1676. The temple's *shinden*-style altar room and luxurious *shōin*-style suite of rooms are decorated with gold-ground sliding-door paintings (*shōhekiga*) by Kano Masunobu (Tōin, 1625–1694) and Einō (1631–1697), with additional panels commissioned from Matsumura Go Shun (1752–1811) and Keibun (1779–1843) for Emperor Kōkaku (1771–1830).

The Hayami-ryū's links with the Shōgoin date from the 16th day of the 10th month, 1786, when the founder Sôtatsu led a tea gathering at which Ein'in no Miya (1772–1830), the Prince-Abbot (*hosshinnō*) of Shōgoin and Emperor Kōkaku's younger brother, was the principal guest. A close collaboration immediately ensued, resulting in the refinement of a new courtly tea style (*kyūterfu*) and an entrée into circles so rarefied they were known as *unjō*, or 'above the clouds'. As an added honour, Ein'in granted Sôtatsu the Buddhist name Yojuin.

From the start, Kokaku had taken a delighted, but necessarily remote, interest in his brother's passion. Following the Great Tenmei Fire of the 1st month, 1788, Kokaku relocated to the safety and privacy of Shōgoin. He was reunited with his brother Ein'in, their father Kan'in no Miya Sukehito (1733–1794) and in the nearby Shōrenin temple Kōkaku's principal sponsor for the throne, retired empress Go-Sakuramachi (1740–1813). Shōgoin and its countryside retreat, the Shirakawa Palace, served as temporary refuge through months of dire devastation until the emperor's return to his new imperial palace in the eleventh month, 1790. In late 1789,



2  
Sōen Sōshō making his  
oath of consecration,  
Shōgoin, 17 March 2019

3  
Retired abbot of Shōgoin,  
Miyagi Taigaku, taking his  
place before the main altar  
at Shōgoin, 17 March 2019

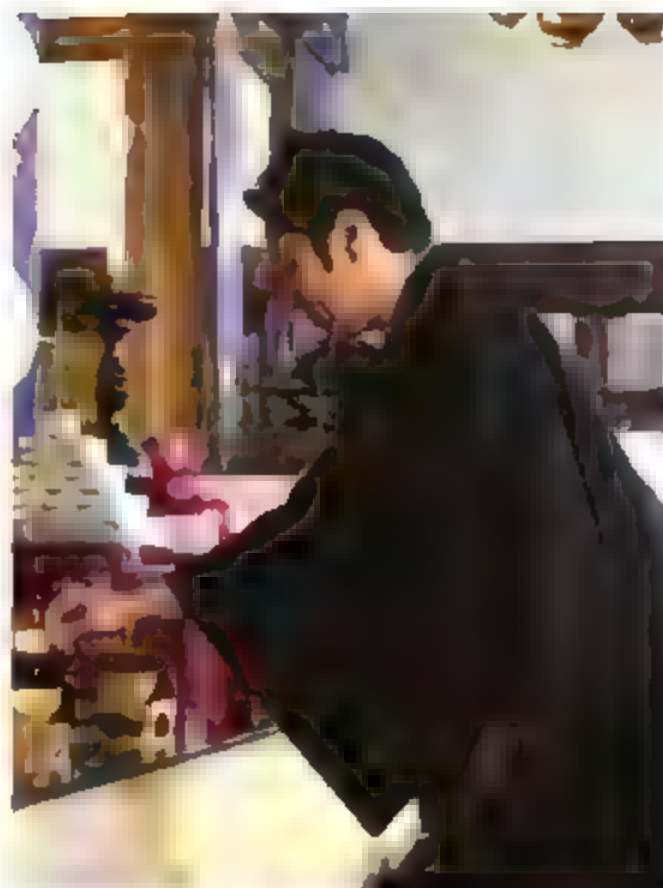


Kōkaku expressed a desire for a bamboo tea scoop (*chashaku*) to be hand-carved by Sōtatsu for use in a *kencha* ceremony to be performed before him and Ein'in at the Shirakawa Palace. Sōtatsu presented a set of three tea scoops. To commemorate that event, on its fifth anniversary day in 1794, Sōtatsu carved a duplicate set, which remains in Hayami-ryū's possession. Its wooden case bears an inscription brushed by the third Ōmoto Hayami Sōyō (1813–1876), detailing this prestigious commission.

These three scoops illustrate the hierarchic style of the Hayami-ryū (fig 6). The shorter, darker tea scoop is plain, without a node, and denotes the formal *shin* style of tea as devised by Murata Jukō (1423–1502). The longest has a variegated tip with the node at the base of the handle and is in the semi-formal *gyō* style of Takeno Jōō (1502–1555). The third, which has a thick node at its centre, is in the informal *sō* style associated with Sen no Rikyū (1522–1591).<sup>4</sup> Not only are these scoops designed for use in different types of tea gatherings but they also embody the history of early tea and allude to the conviviality uniting tea practitioners of differing ranks.

On the 24th day of the 11th month, 1789, Sōtatsu was summoned twice to perform tea gatherings at the Shirakawa Palace, where he was presented with an imperial gift of a Ko-Seto tea caddy (*chaire*). Named *Hatsuse* ('First Seto') by Emperor Go-sai (1638–1685), this small tea caddy of late 16th–early 17th century remains the Hayami-ryū's most treasured 'famous object' (*meibutsu*) dating from the era of Sen no Rikyū (fig. 7).<sup>5</sup> The design of this piece resembles the imported Song dynasty (960–1279) Jian-ware medicine containers that were used for the powdered tea served at Ashikaga courtly tea gatherings. It has two ivory lids and is protected by four silk pouches and an inscribed wooden box. Sōtatsu devised a replacement for the missing original tray.

4-  
Soen Sosho presenting his  
tea offering at the main  
altar, Shōgoin, 17 March 2019



5-  
Shōgoin, main altar with  
17th-century lacquered  
wood statue of En no  
Gyōja, flanked by his  
attendants Zenki and  
Goki, later polychrome  
sculptures of Kujaku Myōō  
and Aizen Myōō, and the  
offerings made on the day,  
17 March 2019



6.

Hayami Sotatsu

Set of Three Presentation

Bamboo Tea Scoops

(*chashaku*)

Bamboo, dated 16th day,  
11th month, 1804, from top  
to bottom: 20.5, 17.5, 18 cm,  
memorial copies made on  
the fifth anniversary day of  
the three tea scoops carved  
on the 16th day, 11th month,  
1789, by Sōtatsu at the  
request of Ein'in no Miya

竹 茶 杓 三 本 組



7

Ko-Seto tea caddy (*chaire*),

named *Hatsuse* by Emperor

Go-sai, late 16th–early

17th century, stoneware,

late Muromachi or early

Edo period, 6 × 7 cm

瀬 戸 茶 入  
茶 入 六 七 寸  
茶 入 六 七 寸



The mottled brown glaze has bluish highlights and circular white kiln frits, which terminates in a ragged pattern showing a line of white underglaze slip. The effect is that of a partially clouded, starry night sky over a mountainous landscape, a desirable feature for the poetic contemplation and appreciation of utensils that was part of any tea gathering

### The 'Honourable Title Incident' (Songō Jiken)

This exchange of gifts marks the flowering of Sōtatsu's imperial ties and may well be tokens of Kōkaku's appreciation of the tea master's involvement as his discreet emissary during the so-called 'Honourable Title Incident' (Songō Jiken). In a protracted verbal and epistolary battle against the shogun's formidable senior councillor, Matsudaira Sadanobu (1759–1829), that lasted from 1788 to 1794, Kōkaku sought to obtain for his father the title of retired emperor (*daijō tennō*), although the latter had never served as emperor. As Kōkaku had been adopted from the subsidiary Kan'in line, this title would have granted Kan'in no Miya Sukehito more elevated ceremonial seating rights, affirming the emperor's legitimacy. Kōkaku's petition did not succeed beyond the receipt of shogunal funding for the rebuilding of his palace in a Heian period (794–1185) revivalist style. It brought together, however, a high-level coterie of supporters striving towards a new ethos

Reverence for the emperor (*sonno*) as a quasi-divine being lay at the root of the theories espoused in the new fields of 'Japanese Studies' (*wagaku*) and 'Ancient Studies' (*kogaku*), whose students included Sōtatsu and a number of his more prominent followers. Following decades of catastrophic natural disorders, seen as a manifestation of divine discontent, and compounded by the overbearing rule of a shogunal government



8.  
Mochizuki Gyokusen  
Shigeteru (1795–1852)  
Posthumous Portrait of  
Hayami Sōtatsu, hanging  
scroll, ink and light colours  
on paper, c. 1830s,  
196 × 44 cm

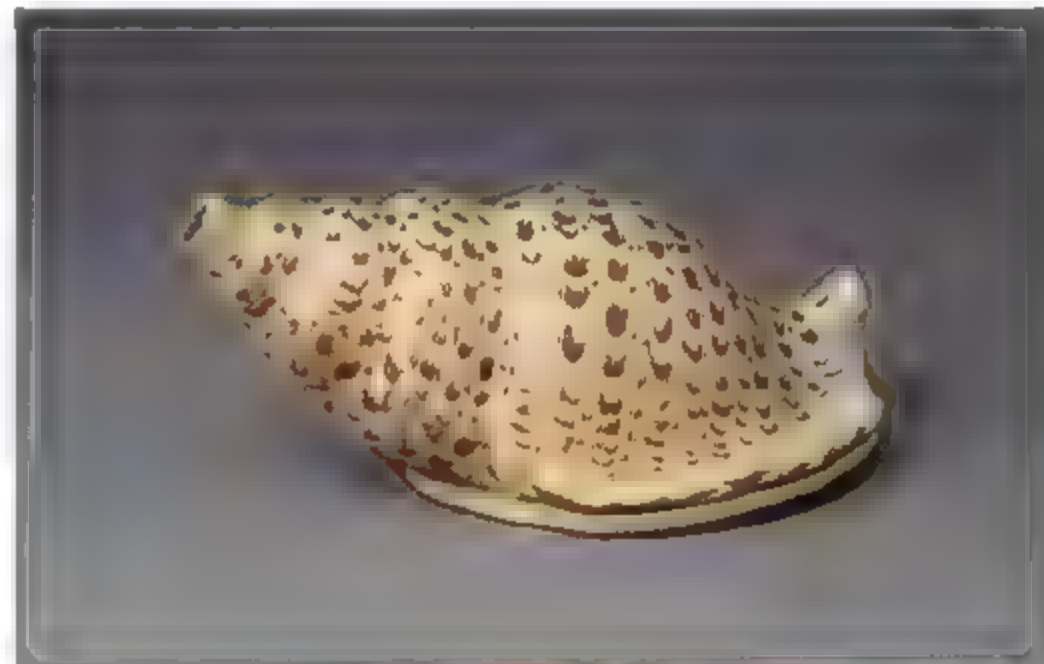
eclipsing a powerless emperor, the Confucian ideal of a wise and benevolent king ruling through just administrators appeared upended. In a Confucian world, this implied the potential loss of the Mandate of Heaven, which had to be restored. The study of sacred Japanese texts and the revival of ancient rites and arts were understood as the sole means of reviving a mythic, ideal golden imperial past.

An emperor had no voice. Imperial matters were managed by regents and imperial wishes relayed by regulated official intermediaries. The only way Kōkaku could be heard by his putative supporters would be through unofficial channels; none was more unobtrusive than a tea master with a wide-ranging clientele. Supporters of the emperor included, notably the regent Ichijō Teruyoshi (1791–1795), the Master of the Consort's Household Tokudaiji Sanemi (1753–1819), the envoy Nakayama Naruchika (1741–1814) and disaffected daimyo, notably Ikeda Harumasa of Bizen (1750–1819). All of these men practised Hayami-ryū tea. Naruchika had the unenviable task of pleading Kōkaku's case before the shogun in 1792 and was incarcerated for his pains. Harumasa found himself side-lined in Edo and forced into retirement.<sup>6</sup> Affiliation to a tea school was generally passed down within a family. A number of the descendants of Sōtatsu's followers became notable loyalist figures of the Meiji Restoration in 1868.<sup>7</sup>

## A Graceful Rise

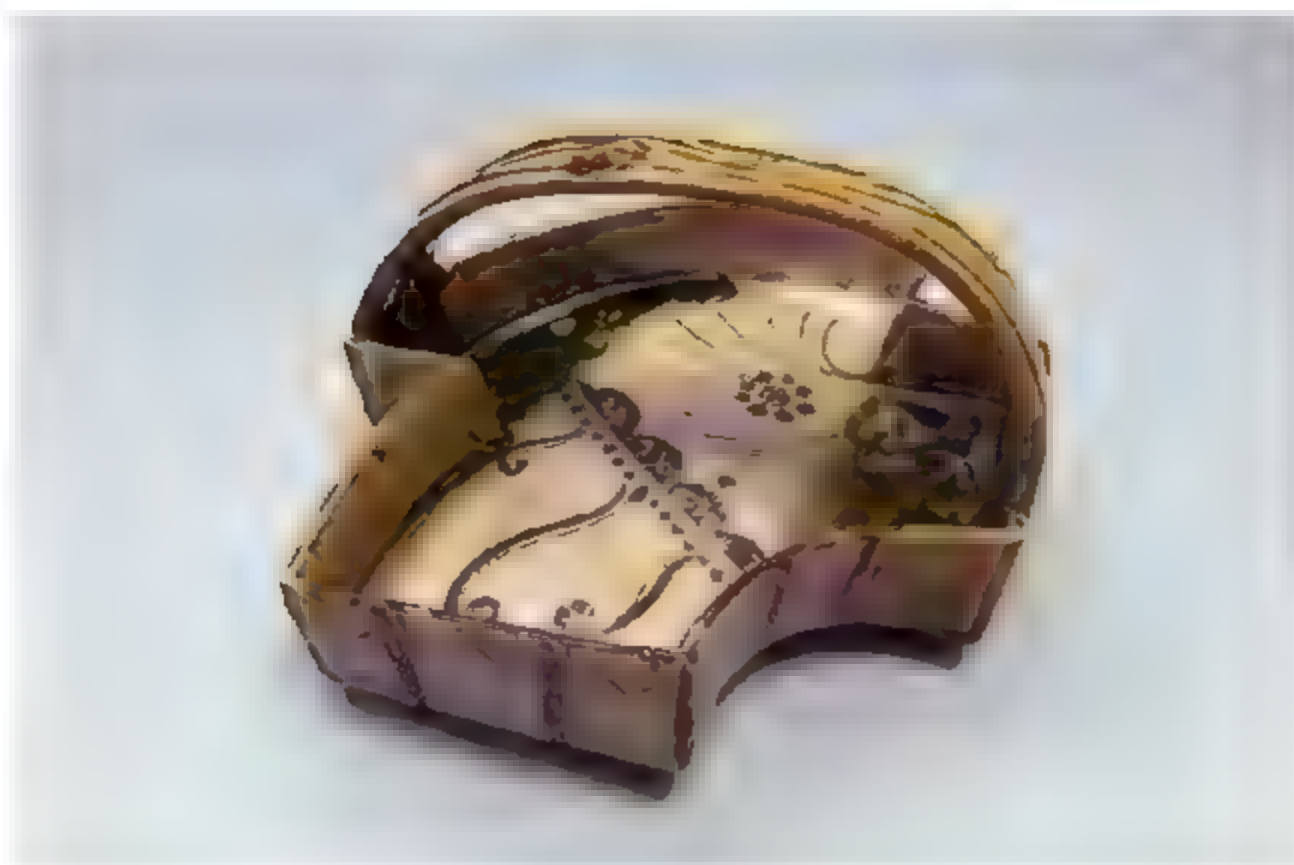
Sōtatsu had already enjoyed a meteoric rise even before his ties with Shōgo in 1786 established him as the go-to tea master for the nobility (fig. 8). Born into a long lineage of court physicians, Sōtatsu chose instead to train, aged fifteen in 1754, under Yugensai Ittō Sōshitsu (1719–1777), the eighth *iemoto* of Urasenke, one of the three schools of tea directly descended from Sen no Rikyū. By Sōtatsu's time, Senke-style *chanoyū* was

widely perceived as having sunk to the level of a wealthy townsman's pastime, where competition for increasingly expensive, provenanced tea wares eclipsed Rikyū's Zen-based ethos of humility and *wabi-sabi* (the beauty of imperfect or transient things).<sup>8</sup> As tea practice consolidated through the seventeenth century, schools other than the three Senke lineages (Urasenke, Omotesenke, Mushakōjisenke) emerged to cater for the requirements of specific groups such as 'daimyo tea' (*daimyō-cha*) and 'court tea' (*kyūteifū*). In the former, upper-level members of the warrior class were seated and served according to rank. This practice favoured colourful Mino wares while the latter favoured the use of elegant ceramics in luxurious *shinden*-style surroundings (figs. 9 & 10). A century and a half later, these strands of warrior and court tea had either fossilised or lost their original communal and spiritual purpose. All claimed the Rikyū heritage for their varied and socially targeted practices,



9.  
Nonomura Ninsei (1648–1690)  
Incense burner (*koro*) in the shape of a conch shell, c. 1660–  
1680, stoneware with clear glaze and stippled underglaze  
iron decoration, 11.5 × 27.6 × 15.7 cm





10.  
Dish in the Shape of a  
Double Fan with Arched  
Handle, Momoyama  
period, late 16th–early 17th  
century, Mino ware, Onbe  
style, stoneware with  
underglaze iron-brown and  
copper-green glaze, 14.9 ×  
27.9 × 21.9 cm

101	102	103	104	105
106	107	108	109	110
111	112	113	114	115
116	117	118	119	120
121	122	123	124	125
126	127	128	129	130
131	132	133	134	135
136	137	138	139	140
141	142	143	144	145
146	147	148	149	150

but only the three Senke schools could claim direct lineal descent, thereby cultivating followers from every social stratum.

By the time Sōtatsu joined Urasenke in 1754, iemoto Yugensai Ittō Sōshitsu had been working closely for a decade with his brother, Joshinsai Tennen Sōsa (1705–1751) of Omotesenke; Kawakami Fuhaku (1719–1807), Omotesenke-trained founder of Edosenke; and head priest Mugaku Soen (1720–1791) from Rikyū's home base, the Daitokuji, to restore their tea practice. The iemoto system of transmission from master to pupil was consolidated by the introduction of a seven-level promotion of students.<sup>9</sup> The appropriate choice of utensils (*chadogu*) was codified through the patronage of select lineages of craftsmen, the best known being the Chōjirō family of Raku potters.<sup>10</sup> Now they concentrated on rejuvenating the actual means of preparing and serving tea, known as *temae* (literally 'before the hand'), through an elaborate choreography of collaborative gestures referred to as the 'seven exercises' (*shichijishiki*).<sup>11</sup> Urasenke-practising noblemen soon adopted these mandatory seven steps and incorporated them into their aristocratic practice (*kinindemae*).<sup>12</sup>

Having abandoned his ancestral calling, Sōtatsu sought to make tea his life and livelihood. Hayami-ryū records, mainly compiled by the second-and third-generation iemoto, state that Sōtatsu was well versed in Confucianism and Japanese studies from an early age. His skills were soon appreciated, such that in 1758, aged nineteen, he was invited to host at the 100th anniversary memorial *chakai* (tea gatherings) held for the Senke founder Genpaku Sotan (1578–1658). Sōtatsu appeared alongside august accredited tea masters to serve an equally eminent audience of rich merchants, daimyo and noblemen. This honour was followed on the 4th day of the 8th month, 1759, by a secret meeting with Yugensai Ittō Sōshitsu, who consulted the young master and accepted his advice on the suitability of particular *temae*, deeming his practice 'perfect'. The final accolade was bestowed ten days later, when at a tea gathering accompanying a special performance of *gagaku* imperial music, Sōtatsu was declared a full fledged tea master.<sup>13</sup>

71

Portable shelf stand  
(*kenchadana*) named  
*Seikyodana* ('Pure Respect  
Shelf') with tea utensils

和歌山県立美術館蔵

This *kenchadana* is a late  
twentieth-century copy  
of the *kenchadana* named  
*Chūgū Gosho kenchadana*  
(*'Inner Palace Tea Offering  
Shelf'*), created for Empress  
Yoshiko in 1808, cedar  
wood, Heisei era (1989–  
2019), 61 × 33 × 27 cm

Top shelf: pair of Raku  
stoneware tea bowls  
(*chawan*), 1790s, c. 7 ×  
12.5 cm, c. 8 × 13 cm, on  
their 'hanging stands'  
(*kōkakedaï*), 1830s, c. 7 × 12  
× 12 cm, c. 8 × 13 × 13 cm

Middle shelf: Vermilion  
Ryūkū lacquer tea caddy  
(*natsume*), 1808, 6 cm, Seto  
pottery 'crane's neck' tea  
caddy (*tsurukubi chaire*)  
named *Kikō*, 1790s, c. 7 cm

Bottom shelf: ivory  
fresh-water jar  
(*mizusahi*) painted with  
chrysanthemum blossoms,  
1808, c. 5 cm, large *nashiji*  
lacquer *mizusashi*, 18 × 15  
cm, modern bamboo tea  
ladle (*hishaku*), c. 33 cm





12.  
Shibata Gītō (1780–1819)  
Hayami Sōtatsu as Lu  
Tong, 1810, detail of a wall  
painting from the Immortals  
Room, Yugasan Rendaiji,  
Okayama, ink and gold  
flecks on paper, panel size  
c. 170 × 170 cm

Photo ©B.B. Shoemaker with kind  
permission of Yugasan Rendaiji

## Expansion

Sōtatsu trained and came of age at a time of intellectual ferment and disaffection with the status quo. The imperative of reverence for the emperor (*sonnō*) could only be met through the restoration of the past in all its most hallowed forms (*fukkō*). A new golden age would dawn if the original one – situated in the past of the Heian period – could be reinstated through the revival of ancient rites within their original architectural framework. This would extend to daily ceremonial, dress and elegant pastimes, including tea.

In the tea world, growing discontent with the power of the Tokugawa shogunate had been manifested from the mid-seventeenth century by wealthy and socially aspiring townsmen opting to eschew ‘daimyo tea’ for schools patronised by the court, which, since the mid-seventeenth century included the Senke lineages.<sup>14</sup> Senke-style tea was an elective pastime, during which social distinctions were extinguished in favour of a carefully prescribed ensemble play. The small, rustic hermit-style *sōan* tea hut and the eight-mat or larger, elegant *shōin*-style tearoom were privileged spaces in which daimyo, noblemen, upper-level clergy and merchants could mix and freely exchange (private) views. Although daimyo are usually presumed to have been confined to a life of duty between their fief and service in Edo (*sankin kōtai*), many held important court titles and maintained familial memorial temples as well as mansions and commercial outposts in Kyoto. ‘Daimyo tea’ practice within their domains was frequently home grown, with some individuals, such as Sakai Sōga (1755–1790), lord of Himeji Castle, and Matsudaira Fumai (1757–1818), lord of Matsue, becoming famous tea masters of the Sekishū school. Both saw tea as a spiritual practice and an aid to good governance; they hosted cultural salons and collected famous tea utensils. By 1770, Sōtatsu counted as his





13.  
Bizen flower vase (*hanoire*)  
with camellias, 19th century,  
unglazed stoneware, c.  
16 cm

Seasonal arrangement for  
March in the decorative  
alcove (*tokonoma*) at  
Tekigenkyo, Kyoto



14.  
Ichijō Saneaki taking tea at  
Tekigenkyo, 'Nobleman's  
Tea', 16 July 2019

© Hayami Tekigenkyo with kind  
permission of Ichijō Saneaki

followers the superintendents of significant domains, leading to invitations to provide direct instruction to their respective daimyo, Date Shigemura of Sendai (1742–1796), Maeda Harunaga (1745–1810) of Kaga, and crucially, Ikeda Harumasa.<sup>15</sup>

Sōtatsu's practice as Urasenke tea master flourished. He eschewed Zen-inspired *wabi-sabi* aesthetic, studying instead pre-Rikyū and ancient Chinese tea texts, and reviving the eight-mat room *shōin* style of tea served with a *dana*, or portable shelf stand (fig. 11). In late 1781, he was invited to found his own school by the Urasenke-practising daimyo Ikeda Harumasa.<sup>16</sup> Sōtatsu spent nineteen days in Okayama teaching *koicha* (thick tea) and the seven exercises at the four-and-a-half mat Moshōan teahouse at the Kōrakuen park. This encounter would be the start of a lifelong friendship, ending with Sōtatsu commemorated as the Chinese Tang-dynasty (618–907) poet of tea, Lu Tong, in Harumasa's guest hall at the Shingon shrine-temple complex, Yugaji (today Yugasan-Rendaiji) (fig. 12).<sup>17</sup>

Sōtatsu established himself to the west of the imperial palace in Kyoto, acquiring an increasingly aristocratic clientele and adapting his *temae* accordingly. By 1785, word had spread that Hayami-ryū had diverged profoundly from Rikyū. The young, tea-besotted Prince-Abbot Ein'in no Miya became an ardent follower after a tea gathering with Sōtatsu on the 16th day of the 10th month, 1786, held at the mansion of Fujita Sai no Miya, an imperial attendant and tea connoisseur.<sup>18</sup> This close relationship was soon cemented by the gift to Sōtatsu of a prestigious incense burner that had been 'liked by Sen Sōtan'. As a hereditary court physician turned tea master, Sōtatsu had gained freedom of access to the inner imperial palace (*Dairi*) and to Shōgoin. The year 1787 was a watershed year for Sōtatsu. In February, he returned to Okayama, where he met again with Ikeda

Harumasa and where he set about completing the training of local aficionados. In doing so, he established the independently functional branch of Hayami-ryū, serving townsmen as well as the warrior class of the region. On the 20th day of the 4th month of that year, Sōtatsu hosted Harumasa at a Kyoto tea gathering that included the loyalist daimyo Ii Naohide (1766–1831) of Hikone and Mōri Haruchika of Chōshū, as well as wealthy sake brewers, possibly in Kyoto for Emperor Kōkaku's delayed enthronement ceremony.<sup>29</sup> In the twelfth month, following his ceremonial visit to the inner imperial palace, Harumasa recorded with much satisfaction the delight the emperor had expressed in Ein'in's new tea practice.

## A New Style for a New Clientele

What Sōtatsu had elaborated through extensive reading of 'old documents' was a return to the purity and conviviality of pre-Rikyū tea. This referred specifically to the refined 'politesse' of Kyoto's Higashiyama court style of the fifteenth century. This was *shōin*-style tea, with the tea prepared by the host in the tearoom, using a portable shelf stand, not prepared, as during the Higashiyama era, by court attendants and cultural advisers (*doboshū*) in the preparation area (*mizuya*). While the Senke motto was 'harmony, respect, purity, tranquillity' (*wa kei sei jaku*), Sōtatsu foregrounded 'respect' – 'respect, harmony, purity, tranquillity' (*kei wa sei jaku*)<sup>20</sup>

Three original *temae* were added to the standard seven by Ein'in and Sōtatsu, creating the Hayami 'point system' (*tenpō*) known as the 'great ceremony' (*igyōhiki*). The (点 *ten*) of *tenpō* (点法) is understood as the concentration required to prepare tea. The first innovation was the revival of one of the earliest forms of tea, prepared 'without the tea scoop' (*dasshaku tenpō*). This was based on the Chinese Song dynasty practice brought to Japan by the

Tendai monk Eisai (1141–1215) that involved adding powdered tea to hot water without using a tea scoop. This was done by gently rotating the tea caddy over a large filled tea bowl (*chawan*)

The tea practice 'Noblemen's (and Noblewomen's) Flowers and Moon' (*kijin tsuki kagetsu*) – also called 'Snow, Moon and Flowers' (*setsugekka*) – consisted of the presentation of stacked tea bowls. Based on a standard tea practice, 'Snow, Moon and Flowers' had a poetic name that alluded to the aesthetic appreciation of the seasons celebrated in Japanese *waka* poetry. The famous verse beginning 'I remember you especially when the snow, moon and flowers are beautiful' refers to the sense of longing conveyed in a celebrated poem by the Chinese poet Bo Juyi (772–846), addressed to his absent friend Yin Xielu as he thought of him upon seeing snow, moon and flowers across the seasons.<sup>21</sup>

The third was the mandarin-tree flower ceremony (*hana no shiki*), which was essentially the Hayami-ryū version of the collaborative seven training exercises. A budding mandarin fruit (*tachibana*) and cherry blossom (*sakura*) are Hayami-ryū's emblems.<sup>22</sup> A paired cherry and mandarin tree have reputedly been standing on the forecourt either side of the reception and ceremonial hall (*Shishinden*) of the inner imperial palace since the Heian period. The compound word *hana-tachibana* derives from the eighth-century *Nihon shoki* (Chronicles of Japan), in which the mandarin fruit and cherry blossom are paired in an allusion to the presence of divinity.<sup>23</sup> Sōtatsu followed the mandatory Senke style of flower arrangement for the alcove, using Bizen or Takatori ceramics for standing vases and self-carved bamboo containers for flowers (*hanaire*) for hanging displays (fig. 13). The latter, signed in cinnabar or otherwise inscribed, could be gifted to followers.<sup>24</sup>

Underlying these new procedures was the creation of three basic trademarks. The first was the use of a *kenchadana* (utensil shelf for 'tea offering to the gods'), pioneered by the *dōbōshū* Nōami in his Ashikaga palace tea (*denchū chanoyū*) and adapted for warrior tea by Kobori Enshū (1579–1647).<sup>25</sup> The second was the presentation of the tea bowls on small carved wooden 'hanging stands'. These stands, hand-carved by Sōtatsu and Ein'in from fragrant wood, were based on descriptions of the hanging stands used for meals by Emperor Suzaku (930–946) in 'New Shoots' (*Wakana*), chapter 34 in the early eleventh-century *Tale of Genji* (*Genji monogatari*).<sup>26</sup> The replica pair on the top shelf of the *kenchadana* are made from light, visibly grained spruce wood. The hanging stands were designed specifically for *kencha* and were associated with a pair of wide, high-footed Raku bowls commissioned for use in the presence of the emperor. Based on the restrained design of Song-dynasty bronze or metal alloy incense burners, the Raku tea bowls have a lustrous metallic sheen derived from sprinkled underglaze flecks of gold and silver (see fig. 11, top shelf). For such august occasions, Sōtatsu also used a yellow Seto tea caddy later named *Kikō* ('Yellow Shore'), a Chinese character combination that was a homonym for *Kōkaku*, and a small, burnished ivory water jar (*mizusashi*) painted with chrysanthemum blossoms (fig. 11, middle and lower shelves).

The third trademark was the use of large two-colour silk cloths (*fukusa*) and folded mulberry papers (*tatōgami*). The design of the *fukusa* was based on the twelve-layer court robes (*kasane*) of the Heian period, whose colour combinations were determined by the changing seasons.<sup>27</sup> The use of *fukusa* was first restricted to noblemen of the first to fifth court ranks and daimyo with familial connections to the palace.<sup>28</sup> *Fukusa* embodied purity, with only the one-coloured underside placed in

the *obi* next to the body or on the tatami mat. *Tatōgami* were of more conventional use, for wrapping, holding or covering objects and wiping. A nobleman's *fukusa* would be set down on a *tatōgami* while other tea practitioners would place their *fukusa* directly on the tatami.

The merchant classes were not forgotten in Sōtatsu's development of his new courtly *temae*. He created a specific practice that combined elements from Omotesenke and court practice in a dual strand known as 'high and low appreciation' (*sonpi no rei*). It was first disseminated to followers in Okayama on Sōtatsu's second visit there in 1787. At this time, the domain superintendent Ikeda Ōmi – a follower since 1770 – swore an oath of pupillage. The presence of Hayami-ryū in Okayama was finalised in 1799 with the nomination of the townsman Hitomi Munetomo as *iemoto* of this branch.

Hayami-ryū tea utensils are generally of contemporary manufacture, elegantly sidestepping the mania for collecting famous ancient pieces. Over time, this practice resulted in the creation of a collection of tea wares spanning over two hundred years. As it would have been unseemly to serve a grandee with the same ceramics, courtly etiquette prompted a tradition of commissions from a wide spectrum of craftsmen that continues to this day. Hence, a lacquer caddy for thin tea (*natsume*) and Satsuma tea bowls bearing the Hayami 'mandarin and cherry blossom' emblem were commissioned to mark the beginning of the Reiwa era in 2019.<sup>29</sup>

## Above the Clouds

Although literary and poetic allusions abounded in all strands of tea, the antiquarian mood of the time focused on the importance of Japan's ancient imperial heritage. Its restoration was the rootstock of Hayami-ryū, evidenced in the naming of utensils



and practices. The justification for imperial reverence owed its roots to Chinese Confucian mores. This approach attracted courtiers nostalgic for a golden age, who were weary of the warrior classes and were themselves students of 'Japanese Studies' and of the nascent 'Native Studies' (*kokugaku*) of Motoori Norinaga (1730–1801). Intellectual members of the merchant classes were also drawn in.

The 'Noblemen's (and Noblewomen's) Tea' (*kijindemae*, also known as *ōcha* or 'great tea') remains Hayami-ryū's signature *temae*. This ceremony was performed by Sōen Sōshō on 16 July 2019 in the eight-mat room of the Tekigenkyo to honour Ichijō Saneaki (b. 1945), direct descendant of the major Hayami-ryū patrons, Ichijō Teruyoshi (1756–1795). As regent in 1791–1795, Ichijō Teruyoshi supported Kōkaku's cause, and his son, the regent Ichijō Tadayoshi (1774–1837). Ichijō Saneaki had been invited to take part in the Gion Festival to celebrate the 180th anniversary of the festival's revival.

In the absence of a raised dais (*jōdan*) and cushion (*shitone*), the guest was seated on a blue cloth in front of a calligraphy by Tadayoshi displayed in the alcove (*tokonoma*) (see fig. 17). The tea was prepared from the light-coloured wooden *kenchadana* named *Seikyōdana* ('Pure Respect Shelf') by the sixth *iemoto* Sojin Sashō (1899–1984) (see fig. 11). The openwork sides of the *kenchadana* are cut in the shape of a flaming bowl, an emblem found on Buddhist household altars and lanterns since the Heian period. In this case, it has the meaning of 'passion of the tea bowl' (*ochawan ni honō*)<sup>30</sup>. The thick and thin teas (*koicha* and *usucha*) were served in a two-coloured bowl made by the Kyoto potter Yoshimura Rakunyū (b. 1959), paired with an 1830s Yatsushiro-ware celadon tea bowl with underglaze slip decoration of a standing crane, a gift from Tadayoshi to Sōken Sōshō (1813–1876). These were set on 'hanging stands' placed before the guest on a low black lacquer table (*fumizukue*), not handed to him (figs. 14 & 15).

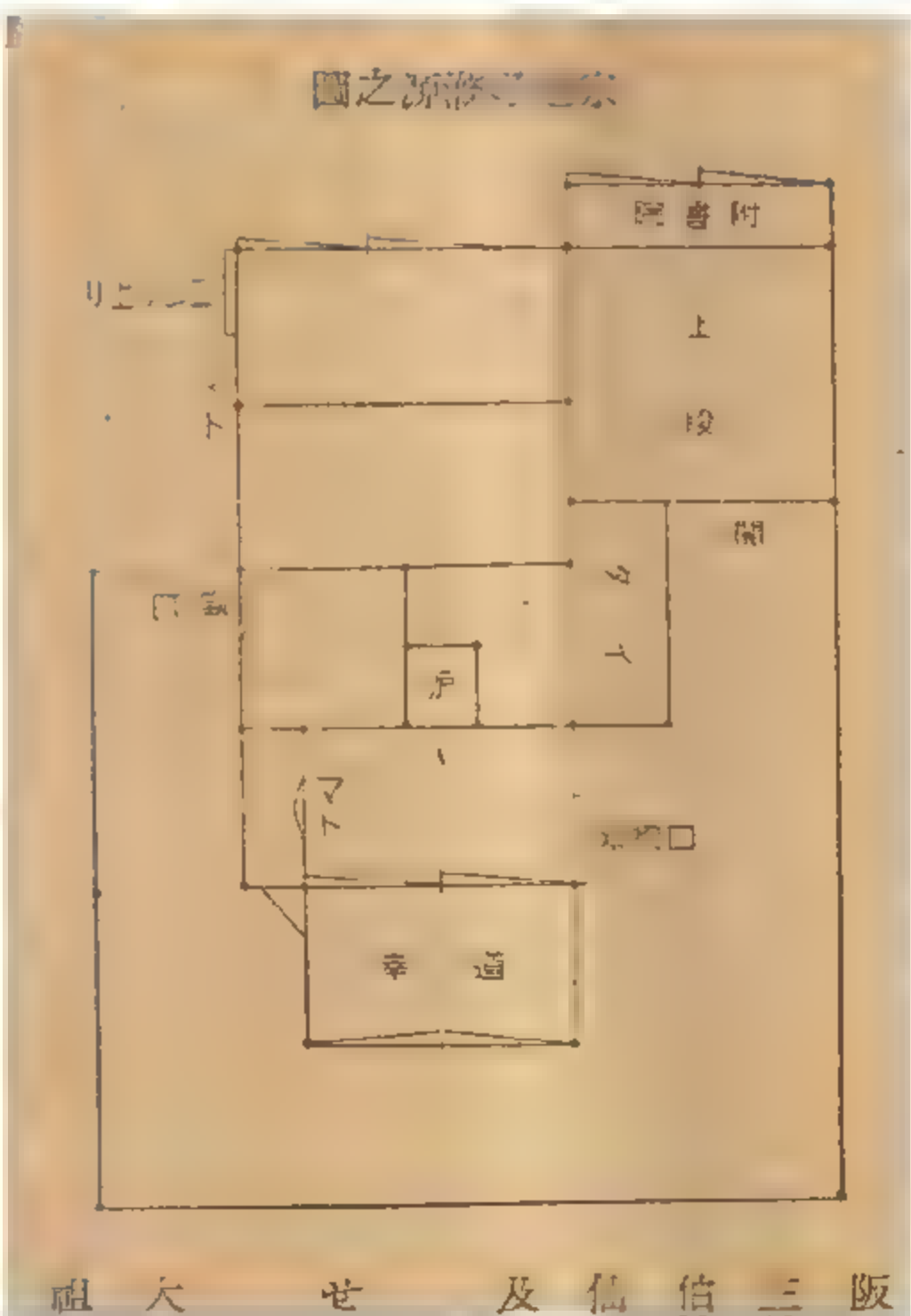


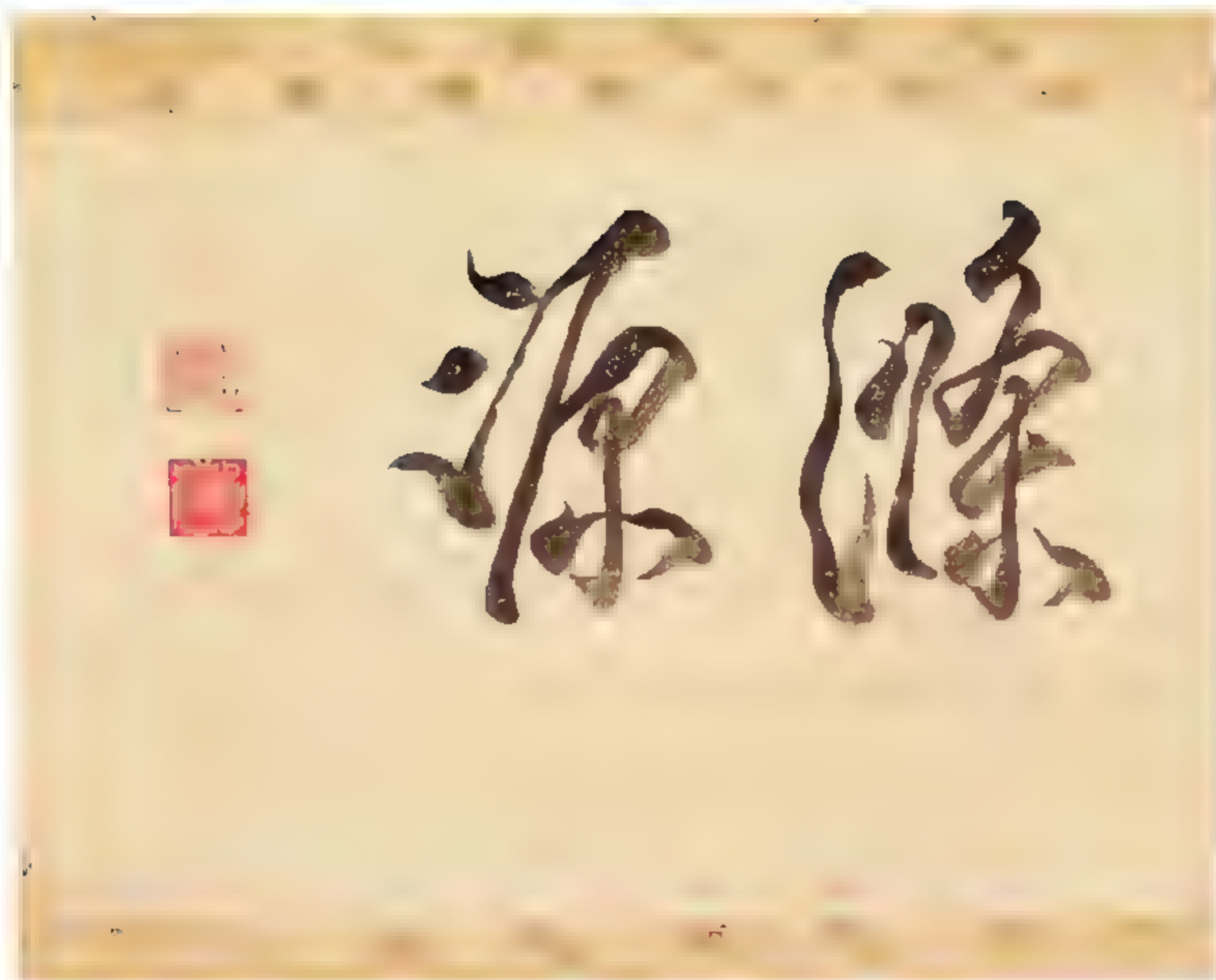
15. Yatsushiro crackle-glazed celadon tea bowl (*chawan*) for thin tea (*usucha*) with underglaze white slip design of a standing crane, in Korean *Bucheong*-revival style, stoneware with white slip and clear glaze, 1830s, 10 × 8cm, gift from Ichijō Tadayoshi to Sōken Sōshō

© Hayami Tekigenkyo

16. Floor plan of the 1804 Tekigenkyo *chashitsu*, from an original drawing by Hayami Sōtatsu,

© Hayami Tekigenkyo





17.  
Ichijō Tadayoshi  
Tekigen calligraphy, sealed  
Ichijō chūryō hitsu (Brush of  
Ichijō's Loyalty), c. 1804,  
hanging scroll, ink on  
paper, 54 × 110 cm

4. Photo: Tekigen

## Tekigenkyo

Tekigenkyo is the name of Hayami-ryū's headquarters located between Kyoto's Kitano and Hirano Shrines. The third remoto Soken Soshō (1813–1876) relocated to this site in 1862. The present-day Tekigenkyo comprises a suite of rooms, including a two-mat room, a four-and-a-half-mat room, its signature eight-mat room as well as a garden, offices and living quarters.

After the Great Tenmei Fire of 1788, Sōtatsu settled in Kamanza Demizu, situated between the Nijō and Sentō palaces, in close proximity to the top-echelon noblemen's mansions that were clustered along the imperial palace's western edge. To further

his court practice, in 1801 Sōtatsu started raising funds for a new two-mat teahouse in an Ashikaga-period style. Completed by 1804, this archaistic building consisted of a raised, double dais (*jodan no ma*) with wide lateral display shelving, a large alcove and preparation room, with subsidiary spaces for attendants or lower-status guests (fig. 16). Entry was through sliding doors, and the floor had oversized 'noblemen's tatami' (*kijindatami*). The all-important hearth (*furō*) was offset in such a way that guest and tea master would be out of each other's line of vision, as required by ancient societal norms. On its inauguration, Ichijō Tadayoshi named the teahouse *Tekigenkyo* and commemorated the event with a calligraphy of its name

(fig. 17). The first two characters, *teki* (滝) and *gen* (源), mean 'purity' and 'origin', and together with *kyo* (居) can be read 'Source of Purity House'

Following convention, Sôtatsu also attended his followers in their mansions or temples. In 1808, he was invited to the Chûgû Inner Palace to perform a *kencha* for Empress Yoshiko (1779–1846) to honour her husband Kôkaku, a rite performed with newly commissioned lacquer water jars and pair of lacquer caddies for thin tea (*natsume*). The water jar imitates the shape of a leather barrel, complete with imitation stitched seams. It is decorated with chrysanthemum branches in gold and silver leaf in a continuous design running across its sides and slightly domed lid (fig. 18). The design represents the imperial family's emblem, with full blossoms extending to buds signifying continuation. The event is recorded in an inscription penned by the second *iemoto*, Sôyô Sôshô (1771–1825), on the box of the water jar.<sup>31</sup>

The pair of *natsume*, named *Kippû* ('Blessed Princess' or 'Auspiciousness'), depicts complementary themes in vermilion and black lacquer (fig. 19). They are decorated in contrasting styles by Tosa Mitsusada (1738–1806), head of the Imperial Painting Bureau, and executed by the Matsuyama lacquer workshop of Aomori, Fukuyama. The black lacquer *natsume* is ornamented with a design of distant mountains in moonlight, further embellished with dense gold and silver sprinkled metallic powder. A few strokes of black lacquer on the vermilion tea container render an image of two ravens at first light. Both caddies, of a type generally used for thin tea, refer in their decoration to wistful love. The 'Blessed Princess' alludes to an episode in the Chinese *Commentary on the Spring and Autumn Annals* (*Zuo zhuan*), summarised in the phrase 'good spouse, good friendship' cited by Sôtatsu. The named imagery of the individual caddies, however, is inspired by Japanese

themes. The 'distant mountains' derives from a verse in the tenth-century Japanese poetry anthology *Collection from Ancient and Modern Times* (*Kokinshû*) – 'autumn leaves that fall in the distant mountains are damasks worn in the darkness of night' and speak to feelings of longing. Alluding to a popular eighteenth-century ballad, the cawing ravens signify a love that transcends death.<sup>32</sup>

## Legacy

Before his death in 1809, Sôtatsu developed strong imperial links through his revivalist style. His creation of a novel practice that harked back to idealised courtly traditions with utensils and *temae* – styled or named after emotionally resonant, poetic medieval prototypes – enthused a disaffected nobility. The next two generations consolidated. The *iemoto* Sôyô Sôshô (1771–1815) published Sôtatsu's manuscripts *Teahouse Tale* (*Kissashû shôen*) and *Skilful Means of Tea* (*Chashiriyaku*), and sought to spread the Hayami-ryû to a wider audience. *Iemoto* Sôken (1813–1876) published Hayami's *Rules of Tea* (*Chasoku*), establishing its unchanging *temae* and presiding over the relocation of Tekigenkyo to its current location. Sokyû Sôshô (1840–1924), known as Niwa no Sokyû ('Garden Sokyû'), was a respected designer of gardens and miniature rock landscapes (*bonseki*). He created the court-style two-mat teahouse exhibited at the 1910 Japan-British Exhibition in White City, London (fig. 20).<sup>33</sup> He also decided not to relocate to Tokyo after the Meiji Restoration but nonetheless retained close links with members of the aristocracy.

The Hayami-ryû experienced a dip in popularity after the appointment of Japan's first woman *iemoto*, Sôsei, in 1924 (1887–1945). Culturally, women were enjoined to learn the tea ceremony but teaching it proved too far thinking. The post-war *iemoto* Sôjin (1899–1984) and Sôen Sôshô's predecessor and





18

Water Jar (mizusashi)

with lid, commemorative

contemporaneous replica

of the mizusashi gifted to

Empress Yoshiko at the

Chugu Inner Palace, c. 1808,

black lacquer with gold and

silver, 18 x 15 cm

Art at the University



19.  
Tosa Mitsusada  
Pair of tea caddies named  
Kippri ('Blessed Princess' or  
'Auspiciousness'), c. 1808,  
Ryūkyū vermilion lacquer  
with black lacquer painting,  
and Fukuyama black  
lacquer, each: 6 × 6 × 6 cm

father, Sōgaku Sōshō (b. 1941), were Waseda University-trained scholars in religion and philosophy. Sogaku renewed the ancient links with Shōgoin that were interrupted in Sōsei's time. Links to Sotatsu's main patrons, the Shōgoin and the Ichijō family, have continued to the present day. Hayami-ryū in Kyoto, and, under the stewardship of Nakano Sōryo, its Tokyo outpost Sawakai, are thriving, teaching and hosting tea gatherings for aficionados, embassies and other institutions (figs. 21 & 22)

## Conclusion

Sotatsu was active at a time when influential schools of thinkers were questioning the Sino-centric orthodoxies of Neo-Confucianism and what was understood as its debased application by an overbearing Tokugawa shogunal government. Scholars and noblemen turned their attention to the Japanese past, its history, literature and arts in their search for validation. Within that past they saw an ideal age of culture and benevolent rule. When Kokaku sought to challenge the shogunate, Sotatsu acted as his go-between with fellow loyalist tea practitioners. The antiquarianism of Hayami-ryū proved perfectly in tune with the revivalist ethos prevalent in the imperial capital. Although it could never revive a mythic golden age, it helped foster an influential new way of thinking.







## NOTES

I would like to express my deep gratitude to Sōen Sōshō and Nakano Sōryo of Sawakai, Tokyo, for their invaluable, infinitely patient assistance during the research for this article, and for their generosity in providing me with newly digitised images of their paintings and tea utensils.

1 Sōen Sōshō (b. 1981) (*tokudō* or religious name, and *sōmei*, or tea name Sōkō), is a graduate in Chinese studies from Kyoto's Bukkyō [Buddhist] University, where he lectures on Japanese culture. He is also an ordained priest of the Shōgoin and a practitioner of Shugendō. He held his first tea ceremony aged just six. Since 2011 he has been researching the history of the Hayami-ryū and teaching the style at the school's Kyoto headquarters, Tekugenkyo, and at affiliate branches in Tokyo (Sawakai), Osaka, Hiroshima and Shiga.

2 I was honoured to be invited to witness this special event. Most of the biographical information for this paper came through verbal and email communications with Sōen Sōshō and Nakano Ryoko (tea name Sōryo) of Hayami-ryū, and from the Hayami-ryū websites (<http://www.hayamiryu.com/index.html> – top: <http://sawakai.org>), Hayami Sōgaku, Hayami-ryū to Okayama, Okayama Prefectural Museum of Art, Okayama Prefecture, 2008, and Beatrice B. Shoemaker, 'Tea and Immortality, The Splendid Reclusion of Ikeda Harumasa', *Andon* 107 (Spring 2019): 42–64.

3 <http://www.hayamiryu.com/index.html> – top, accessed 28 August 2020.

4 Jennifer L. Anderson, *An Introduction to Japanese Tea Ritual*, State University of New York Press, New York, 1991, 189.

5 Tim Cross, *The Ideologies of Japanese Tea, Subjectivity, Transience and National Identity*, Global Oriental, Farnham, 2009, 88; and Paul Varley and Isao Kumakura, eds., *Tea in Japan: Essays on the History of Chanoyu*, University of Hawai'i Press, Honolulu, 1989, 179–80.

6 For an overview of this episode, see Timon Screech, *The Shōgun's Painted Culture, Fear and Creativity in the Japanese States 1760–1829*, Reaktion Books, London, 2000, 150–52; Marius B. Jansen, *The Making of Modern Japan*, Harvard

University Press, Cambridge, 2000, 205–8; and Donald Calman, *The Nature and Origin of Japanese Imperialism: A Reinterpretation of the Great Crisis of 1873*, Routledge, London, 1992, 44–47; and Herman Ooms, *Charismatic Bureaucrat: A Political Biography of Matsudaira Sadanobu, 1758–1829*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1975, 109–14.

7 Nakayama remained close to Sōtatsu and was rewarded for his pains by Kōkaku with two of his daughters becoming consorts of Emperor Ninkō, thus becoming Emperor Meiji's grandfather. Ichijō Tadayoshi's granddaughter became Empress Shōken. Other loyalist Sōtatsu pupils included the Tokudaiji and Saionji clans, who held important posts in the new Meiji government.

8 Rikyū was based at the Rinzai Zen temple, Daitokuji.

9 Tatsusaburo Hayashiya and Nakamura Masao, *Japanese Arts and the Tea Ceremony*, Weatherhill, New York, 1974, 125.

10 Morgan Pitelka, *Handmade Culture: Raku Potters, Patrons and Tea Practitioners in Japan*, University of Hawai'i Press, Honolulu, 2005, 97–102. The Senke schools employ a mandated set of ten craftsmen families. See Genshitsu Sen and Sōshitsu Sen, *Urasenke Chadō Textbook*, Tankōsha, Kyoto, 2011, 199.

11 These are collaborative exercises: the roles of host and guest are decided by drawing lots from flower and moon cards (*kogetsu*), each individual performs a different task (*shōza*), taking turns arranging the charcoal (*mawarizumi*) and arranging the flowers (*mawaribana*), evaluating one another's practice (*ichi ni san*) as well as tasting and guessing different teas (*chakabuki*). These named practices are executed with slight variations by the three Senke schools.

12 Hayami, *Hayami-ryū to Okayama*, 5.

13 Presumably at one of one hundred gatherings held between 11 October and 21 December. Genshitsu Sen and Sōshitsu Sen, *Urasenke Chadō Textbook*, 212, and Hayami, *Hayami-ryū to Okayama*, 5–6.

14 Elizabeth Lilliehoj, *Art and Palace Politics in Early Modern Japan 1580–1680*, Brill, Leiden, 2011, 194–95.

15 [https://shinsengumi-archives.github.io/japanese-wiki-corpus/culture/Sowa-ryu School \(a school of Tea Ceremony\)](https://shinsengumi-archives.github.io/japanese-wiki-corpus/culture/Sowa-ryu%20School%20(a%20school%20of%20Tea%20Ceremony)and.html) and.html [http://www.sowaryu.jp/sowa\\_rekishi-e.html](http://www.sowaryu.jp/sowa_rekishi-e.html), accessed 28 August 2020.

16 Hayami, *Hayami-ryū to Okayama*, 7.

17 Shoemaker, 'Tea and Immortality', 50–51.

18 I was unable to clearly identify the participants: go-sobayaku Fujita Saku, the *mbukyō* (chief of the ministry of ceremonies at the palace) Kondō, and Sasaki Bingo no Kami.

19 Both Hikone (Ōmi) and Chōshū (Nagato) were wealthy domains with annual stipends of 300,000 *koku* and an enduring history of dissent from the shogunal government.

20 <http://sawakai.org>, accessed 28 August 2020.

21 Ba Juyi, 'A Poem Sent to Yin Xielu', known in Japan as 'A Poem Sent to In Kyoritsu' and much quoted in the *Musashi* chapters of the *Tale of Genji*.

22 The design of Hayami-ryū's mandarin closely resembles the emblem of the reputed birthplace of Prince Shōtoku (574–622), the Tachibanadera in Asuka, Nara.

23 Tim Cross, *The Ideologies of Japanese Tea*, 48. *Hana* (flower) immediately conjures up *sakura* (cherry blossom).

24 Hayami, *Hayami-ryū to Okayama*, nos. 50–56.

25 George Ellison and Bardwell L. Smith, *Warlords, Artists and Commoners, Japan in the Sixteenth Century*, University of Hawai'i Press, Honolulu, 1987, 212, and Pitelka, *Handmade Culture*, 113.

26 Murasaki Shikibu, trans., Edward G. Seidensticker, *The Tale of Genji*, Penguin Books, London, 1976, 552. The originals are designated 'Important Intangible Cultural Properties' and are in the Kyoto National Museum; exact replicas are used by Hayami-ryū in *kencha* tea ceremonies.

27 Sōtatsu's favourite *fukusa* was purple and 'old blue' (essentially green), and named *Matsugasane*. Court robes and *tatōgami* are described in *Sei Shōnagon*, *The Pillow Book*, Penguin Books, London 2006.

28 Today two-colour *fukusa* are used by all practitioners.

29 The lacquer artist was Shin'ichi Nakamura, who created the *Renwa* enthronement ceremonial platforms, and the potter Tsuji Yugo. Text of NHK Sawakai tea demonstration, November 2019.

30 This emblem is also carved on the Ichijō family memorial steles at the Fundain at the temple, Tōfukuji.

31 Hayami, *Hayami-ryū to Okayama*, no. 74, 63.

32 No. 71, 62, *waka* poem by Ki no Tsurayuki (872–945), compiler of the *Kokinshū* anthology no. 297. *The Raven at First Light, Faint Snowfall in Dreams* (*Akegarasu yume no awayuki*) was the title of a popular narrative song (*shinnai*) by Tsuruga Wakasanojō I (1712–1786) recounting a double love suicide in 1769, Hayami, *Hayami-ryū to Okayama*.

33 Beatrice B. Shoemaker, 'Lost in Translation: The Journey of a Meiji-era Teahouse', *Andon* 108 (Spring 2019) 44–48.



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## Breaking Out of Tradition: Japanese Lacquer, 1890-1950

Jan Dees

*Breaking Out of Tradition* is a book and exhibition catalogue about Japanese lacquer created between 1890 and 1950. While the scope of the publication does not correspond with a specific historical period, it nevertheless coincides with a time of immense political, economic and cultural change that accompanied Japan's Westernisation. The late nineteenth century, for example, was an era of enormous crisis for the lacquer industry, now preoccupied with technical perfection as it assimilated the influences of Western painting from nature (fig. 1). With the opening of the lacquer section at the Tokyo Art School (Tokyo Bijutsu Gakko) in 1890, the traditional apprentice system within lacquer workshops began to decline. Over time, this gave greater prominence to the individual lacquer artist, who increasingly produced all stages of an object.

The book includes three illustrated essays of varying length by the collector and lacquer expert Jan Dees. The first essay introduces Japanese lacquer, with an overview of its early evolution, the main lacquer techniques, subjects, conventions and object types. The second deals with lacquer from 1600 to 1890, covering developments and styles in the Edo period (1603–1868) and in the early decades of the Meiji period (1868–1912). Both offer invaluable material for the specialist and non-specialist, and assist in placing works after this time within a historical context. The third and longest essay in the publication, 'Transcending Tradition 1890–1950', is a perceptive interpretation of lacquer trends from 1890 to 1950. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the popularity (and importance) of world fairs gave rise to domestic exhibitions in Japan. In this third essay the author discusses how national government-sponsored exhibitions began in 1907, even though lacquer artists were not allowed to submit entries to these shows until 1927 (fig. 2).

Despite crises and economic downturns in the 1920s, Tokyo emerged as a modern metropolis. Lacquer artists there, and subsequently through the country, responded with diverse, different and creative styles, most notably in the influence of Art Deco from the late 1920s onwards (fig. 3). At the same time, the use of gold and silver lacquer declined at the expense of colourful effects, made possible in part through the introduction of new pigments. Experiments to produce white lacquer, for example, had always been elusive and is well illustrated by

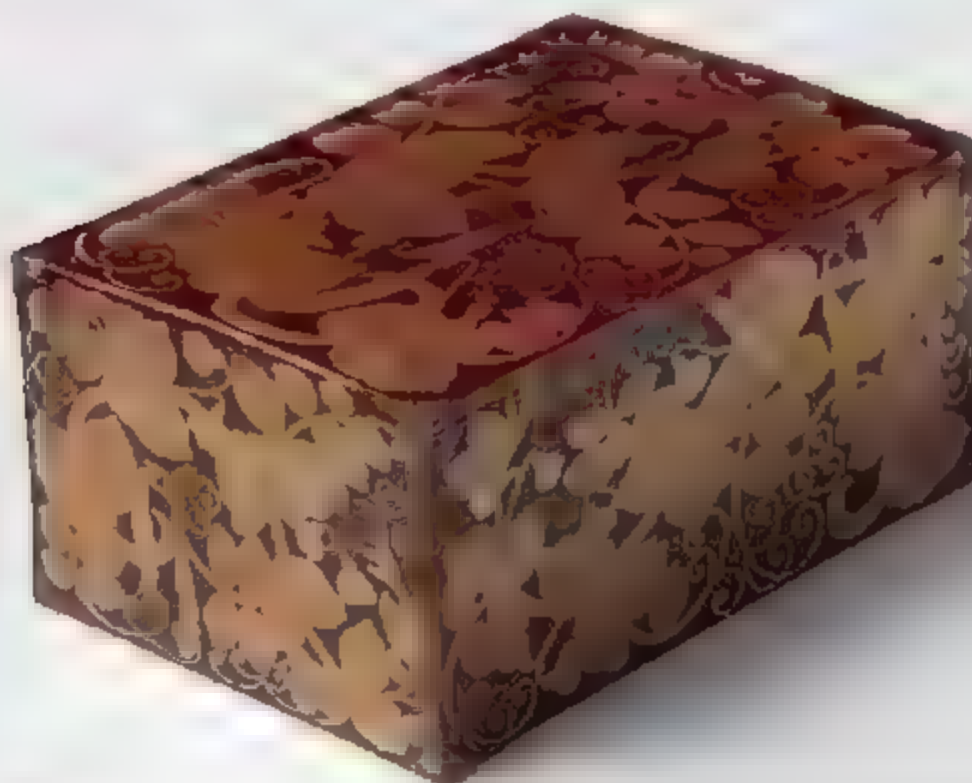


a box imitating Indian chintz (Jp: *sarasa*) (fig. 4). Remarkable and innovative advancements in the field of lacquer also occurred, as seen in the work of Kōmo Tōzan (fig. 5), who was designated a 'Living National Treasure' in 1952 for his technique in extremely high relief.

The most substantial part of the publication comprises a beautifully illustrated catalogue of sixty-seven annotated entries. The lacquer collection of Jan Dees and René van der Star forms the basis of the works in this section, supplemented by key loans from Europe, the United States and Japan. Together these objects provide the foundation of an outstanding exhibition that was scheduled to open this year, first at the Museum für Lackkunst, Münster, and then at the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. Unfortunately, these were cancelled due to the worldwide Covid-19 pandemic; tentative dates are now set for 2021.



1.  
Akatsuka Jitoku  
(1871–1936), Imperial  
Presentation Box with  
Flowering Gentian, gold  
lacquer with mother-  
of-pearl inlay, Jan Dees  
& René van der Star  
Collection, cat. no. 5



2.  
Moriya Shōtei (1890–1972),  
Combined Writing and  
Paper Storage Box with  
Pea Plants, raised gold  
lacquer on a reddish-brown  
ground, exhibited at the  
1930 government-sponsored  
Teiten, Jan Dees &  
René van der Star  
Collection, cat. no. 51

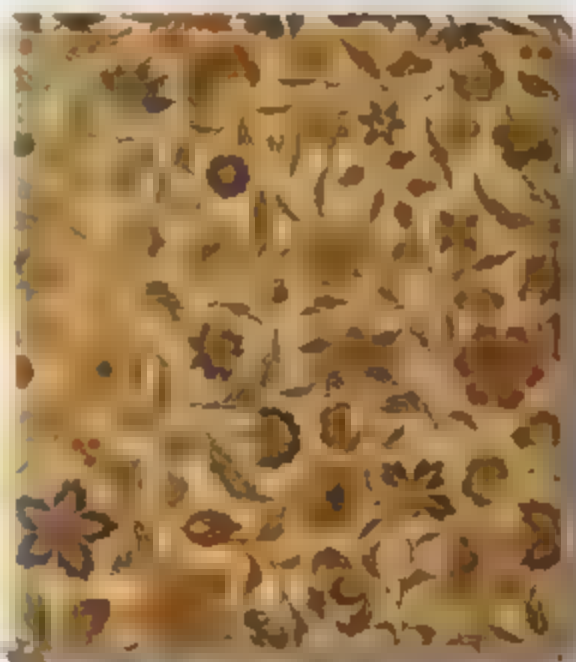
## IN CONCLUSION

*Breaking Out of Tradition* is a scholarly, well researched addition to a much overlooked period in the field of lacquer. The publication will be of interest to the specialist, non-specialist and exhibition visitor alike. The appendix also includes a very useful biography of lacquer artists, with select photographs, and a full bibliography, predominantly in English and Japanese. One minor criticism is that the text contains some out-of-date information, stating, for instance, that the earliest use of lacquer in Japan occurred from 14,000 to 300 BCE, a frustratingly long timespan. Artefacts with applied lacquer, however, have been excavated from Kakinoshima B, Minamikayabe, Hokkaido, and date to 7,000 BCE.

Julia Hult



3.  
Koshida Bizan (1874–1941?),  
Circular Tray on a High  
Foot with a Stylised Bean  
Design, raised black,  
gold and red lacquer, Jan  
Dees & René van der Star  
Collection, cat. no. 61



4.  
Inai Gyokuhō (1876–1930),  
Writing Box with a Floral  
Design Imitating Chintz,  
gold and coloured lacquer  
on a white lacquer ground,  
Jan Dees & René van der  
Star Collection, cat. no. 25



5.  
Kōmo Tōzan (1882–1955),  
Writing Box with  
Aubergines, highly raised  
black on gold lacquer, Jan  
Dees & René van der Star  
Collection, cat. no. 57



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Kamei Tōbei (1901-77), woodcuts published in *Taishū hanga* ("Popular prints"), 1931, vol. 1: (L) "After the bath" and (R) "Cinema woman, twelve months."



## LEFT

Seizo Hirakawa  
(1897-1964)

**Aku no Hana  
(Flower of Evil)**  
c. 1935

Woodblock print  
15 1/2 x 12 inches

## RIGHT

Fumio Kitaoka  
(1918-2007)

**Face, 1952**

Woodblock print  
18 x 14 inches







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Ito Shinsui (1898-1972)  
Snow blizzard  
1932

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